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WEEKEND
EDITION



WINTER
OLYMPICS

US women
beat rival Canada
for 1st gold since '98

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Added Incentive

Navy offers enticements for sailors to extend tours in Japan, Guam, Spain

Sailors man the rails as the guided missile destroyer USS Howard departs Fleet Activities Sasebo, Japan, on Nov. 15. The Navy is allowing first-term enlisted sailors to have their families with them overseas in hopes of improving the forward-deployed fleet.

TYLER PRESTON/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

BY WYATT OLSON
AND CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The Navy on Wednesday announced new incentives that include allowing first-term enlisted sailors to have their families with them overseas to make longer sea duties in Japan, Guam and Spain more enticing.

Effective immediately, first-term sailors E-3 and below can bring family members to overseas locations where dependents are authorized. There are about 3,800 sailors in those grades in Japan and about 400 in Guam, the Navy said.

The Navy's forward-deployed fleet in the Pacific has been under a microscope since back-to-back collisions of destroyers last year left 17 sailors dead.

Reports by the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the Navy have documented numerous deficiencies in the forward-deployed fleet, including insufficient manning and training, delayed maintenance and general sailor fatigue from overwork.

The Navy is in the process of instituting reforms to address those problems.

Seaman Legree Hairston, an aviation ordnanceman on the USS Ronald Reagan, said accompanied tours for E-3 sailors and below would bolster morale for those experiencing life abroad for the first time. "I would find things easier. I wouldn't be so stressed out," said Hairston, who has been stationed in Yokosuka, Japan, for just a few months. "I wouldn't miss home so much."

Another incentive announced Wednesday calls on sailors to extend their sea duty in Japan, Guam and Spain voluntarily to a minimum of four years. Those sailors will have any remaining

SEE NAVY ON PAGE 6

First troops among new front-line adviser brigade arrive in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — A new Army unit created specifically to advise and assist conventional foreign military forces has begun deploying to Afghanistan.

The 1st Security Forces Assistance Brigade — whose members will be dispersed at outposts throughout the country and will be closer to the front lines of the war than most U.S. troops have been in years — is a key component of the Trump adminis-

tration's strategy for ending a stalemate with the Taliban.

Instead of advising high-ranking Afghan commanders, as is done now, the new brigade will work with battalion-level personnel. U.S. military officials in Afghanistan often have cited this

as a vital, missing component of their advising efforts.

The 1st SFAB's leadership has arrived in Kabul, according to a post Wednesday on the unit's Facebook page, and was welcomed by Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Af-

ghanistan. More than 800 members of the brigade will arrive over the coming weeks in preparation for the spring fighting season, which generally begins in early April.

SEE ADVISER ON PAGE 4

PACIFIC

Ivanka Trump, N. Korean official to attend event

Speculation surrounds presence at Olympics' closing ceremony

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea will send a high-level delegation led by a former spymaster to attend the closing ceremony of the Olympics on Sunday, raising speculation about the possibility of a meeting with Ivanka Trump, who also will be in the audience.

The announcement was the latest in a whirlwind of diplomatic developments set off by North Korea's agreement to participate in the Feb. 9-25 Winter Games, which are being held in the South Korean alpine town of Pyeongchang.

South Korean officials have expressed hope they could extend the Olympics detente to bring all sides to the table in a bid to ease months of tensions over the North's nuclear weapons program. But critics accuse the North of waging a charm offensive aimed at easing punishing economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure against it.

The North Korean lineup will include Kim Yong Chol, vice chairman of the ruling Workers' Party; Ri Sol Gwon, head of the state agency in charge of inter-Korean affairs; and six support staff, South Korea's Unification Ministry said Thursday.

They will travel to South Korea by rail ahead of the ceremony Sunday and will stay for three days, the ministry said in a statement.

That could bring them face to face with President Donald Trump's daughter, a fashion designer and former model who serves as one of his senior advisers.

Unification Minister Cho Myoung-gyon told lawmakers Thursday that it's too early



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

Ivanka Trump, the daughter of President Donald Trump, speaks on Jan. 16 during a panel at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex in Washington.

to predict whether the U.S. and the North Koreans will meet on the sidelines of the Olympics.

"But the government will make efforts to lead the U.S. and North Korea to open dialogue," Cho was quoted as saying by the Yonhap News Agency.

Another government official said on condition of anonymity that a meeting between the U.S. and North Korean delegations on the sidelines of the closing ceremony looks unlikely.

Vice President Mike Pence led the U.S. delegation to the opening ceremony in what the administration called an effort to offset what it called a "propaganda charade" by the North Korean delegation, which was led by leader Kim Jong Un's sister.

His office said earlier this week that Pence had planned to meet with the North Koreans, but they canceled at the last minute after the vice president made clear he would maintain a hard line on U.S. demands that the communist state abandon its nuclear weapons program.

Pence drove home that point in the days leading to the ceremony, meeting with North Korean defectors and condemning the North's record of human rights abuses. He also remained seated even as the rest of the crowd stood and cheered as athletes from the two Koreas marched together into the stadium.

Ivanka Trump will be joined by White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders and Allison Hooker, a National

Security Council official who is a Korea specialist.

Administration officials have said Ivanka Trump has no plans to meet with the North Koreans and the purpose of her trip is to cheer on American athletes and to reaffirm the U.S.-South Korean alliance.

Still, her visit has drawn inevitable comparisons to the North Korean leader's sister, Kim Yo Jong, who was dubbed "North Korea's Ivanka Trump" by the South Korean media and delivered an invitation from her brother for Moon to visit the North.

John Delury, an American professor of international relations at Seoul's Yonsei University, said the U.S. missed the opportunity for historic talks during Pence's visit.

He noted the North Korean officials coming to the closing ceremony don't have the direct line to Kim Jong Un enjoyed by his younger sister and the acting head of state who accompanied her.

"That team was better configured for a conversation with Pence, whereas looking at the team they're sending now, they're really coming to talk to the South Koreans," he said. "Unless the North Korean delegation changes, they don't look set up to interact with Ivanka Trump."

Kim Yong Chol, a general and former chief of the military intelligence agency, has been blacklisted by Washington and Seoul in unilateral sanctions.

He is suspected of having orchestrated several attacks on South Korea, including the deadly sinking of the South Korean Cheonan warship and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island in 2010.

South Korea's Unification Ministry said it accepted the delegation's visit "to help advance the process of settling peace on the Korean Peninsula including the improvement of inter-Korean relations and denuclearization."

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MILITARY



JOSHUA FULTON/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The Sri Lanka navy band performs as the USNS Fall River arrives in Hambantota for Pacific Partnership 2017. The Fall River will head to Malaysia, Palau, Thailand and Yap for the 2018 exercise.

Exercise to send US to Sri Lanka, Vietnam

BY TYLER HLVAC
Stars and Stripes

The Asia-Pacific's largest humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief preparedness mission is returning to Vietnam and Sri Lanka as the United States continues to cultivate partnerships in the region.

During this year's Pacific Partnership exercise, which begins Friday and runs through June, the Navy hospital ship USNS Mercy will travel to Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam while the USNS Fall River heads to Malaysia, Palau, Thailand and Yap in Micronesia. Events will include civic-action projects, community health exchanges, medical symposiums and disaster-response training.

More than 800 personnel from the Navy and other countries are involved in the mission, which began in response to a deadly tsunami that ravaged parts of the region in 2004.

This marks the second year Pacific Partnership will visit Sri Lanka, whose location next to a critical sea lane attracts both the U.S. and China.

In October, the USS Nimitz and its strike group made a port call on the capital, Colombo, becoming the first U.S. aircraft carrier to do so in three decades.

This year's Sri Lanka stop will be similar to 2017's mission, said Task Force 73 spokesman Lt.



HANK GETTYS/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The USNS Mercy steams in the Pacific Ocean after completing Pacific Partnership 2016. The Mercy will go to Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam for this year's Pacific Partnership.

The challenges we face with natural and manmade disasters do not respect borders or national sovereignty.

Rear Adm. Don Gabrielson
commander of Task Force 73

Cmdr. Arlo Abrahamson.

"The scope of engagements is on a similar scale with a variety of medical, civil engineering products and community engagements over the course of two weeks," he said.

The U.S. is also pursuing closer ties with Vietnam, which hotly contests Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea. China has built up and militarized artificial islands in parts of the sea that Vietnam and other nations depend on for fishing and commerce.

Abrahamson said the Mercy's Vietnam visit will come sometime after March, when the USS Carl Vinson is expected to stop in Danang, becoming the first U.S. carrier to do so since the Vietnam War.

A multinational response is

necessary when dealing with disasters that aren't confined to a nation's border, said Rear Adm. Don Gabrielson, who serves as commander of Task Force 73 and the executive agent for the mission.

"The challenges we face with natural and manmade disasters do not respect borders or national sovereignty," he said in a Navy statement. "This dynamic mission enables many nations and subject matter experts to come together to pursue solutions to complex problems while enhancing preparations for disaster emergencies that reduce the severity of their impact."

Pacific Partnership is slated to wrap up in June with the Mercy conducting a brief goodwill visit to Tokyo, Abrahamson said.

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an email. The results of the investigation are pending.

"We are continuing to work with NCIS on these reported allegations," McKinney said. "The Navy has a zero tolerance for drug abuse and takes all allegations of misconduct very seriously."

Citing the ongoing investigation, McKinney declined to answer questions about what drugs were allegedly used, how many

midshipmen were involved in the alleged abuse and whether drug sales occurred on Naval Academy grounds.

"We are hoping that the investigation will be complete in the near future and will have more information at that time," he wrote in an email.

NCIS spokesman Ed Buice also declined to answer questions, citing the ongoing investigation.

Lawmakers seek more information on Niger ambush

BY HANK VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Dustin M. Wright were killed in the fight. According to video surveillance obtained by the Times, the soldiers appear to have been separated from the rest of their team on the ground.

In the wake of the attacks, some members of Congress expressed surprise that substantial numbers of U.S. forces were operating in

Niger, home to various militant groups but none that have demonstrated a clear threat to the United States. There are about 800 troops in Niger, since the ambush, a team of U.S. Africa Command investigators has been reconstructing events to determine what went wrong. A report was

initially expected to be released in January but work continues on the document, which is expected to be several thousand pages long.

"Investigations such as this take long as required to get to the truth and determine exactly what transpired in a particular circumstance," said Maj. Karl Wiest, an AFRICOM spokesman. "Although time is very important, investigations are conducted to a standard not necessarily to a timetable."

AFRICOM commander Gen. Thomas Waldhauser is expected to testify before Congress in March as part of an annual appearance by Combatant Command chiefs to update lawmakers on their respective areas of operation. Questions about the ambush in Niger are likely to be at the top of the agenda.

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Naval Academy investigating reports of drug use among midshipmen

The (Annapolis, Md.) Capital

The Naval Academy and Naval Criminal Investigative Service are investigating alleged recreational drug use within the Brigade of Midshipmen, a spokesman said in a statement Tuesday.

Officials have been investigating the allegations for 2½ months, Cmdr. David McKinney, academy spokesman, wrote in

According to the Midshipmen Regulations Manual, the "wrongful use, possession, or willful involvement" in drugs means mandatory separation from the Naval Academy.

Between 2010 and 2011, the NCIS conducted an 11-month investigation into the use of synthetic marijuana by midshipmen. That investigation ended the careers of at least 27 midshipmen.

MILITARY

'Karaoke' event to feature military PowerPoint slides

By MARTIN EGHNASH
Stars and Stripes

"Death by PowerPoint" is what peeling potatoes was to military generations of the past — a shared experience of dreading misery that servicemembers are often "voluntold" to attend.

The heavy use of dry, non-narrative PowerPoint presentations in the military, combined with the massive amounts of information servicemembers need to know, has led to some profoundly boring presentations.

On March 6, participants will gather in San Francisco to have a little fun with all the tedium, poor formatting and unintentional humor.

"Military PowerPoint Karaoke" will be put on by the Internet Archive, a digital archive of the internet's past. It will feature slides from what organizers describe as the "Military Industrial PowerPoint Complex," a collection of publicly available slides from military sites.

The slides will cover a wide range of military topics, such as infantry tactics, combating human trafficking and the intricate procedures required for servicemembers to request leave.

PowerPoint karaoke, also known as Battle Decks, is an increasingly popular improvisational game that can be played in front of audiences or at home for fun. But using military presentations might add to the challenge.

Active-duty servicemembers and recent veterans shared their stories Thursday about the type of material the participants will be

using.

"Sitting through a military PowerPoint presentation was so bad that there was usually a proactive movement within the office to find whatever permissible reason one could to avoid the PowerPoint tour," said Marine veteran Mary Carmona. "I would rather have cleaned toilets for the entire shop than go. Working party elsewhere at the same time as the PowerPoint? Sign me up."

Due to the overwhelming number of Marines who tried to get away from attending the briefs, PowerPoint presentation attendees usually consisted of junior Marines and a few unfortunate noncommissioned officers told to attend, Carmona said.

"You could always tell where the presentation was being held by locating the mass of glam-looking Marines, shuffling slowly into a building, like cows being led to slaughter," Carmona said. "They know it's inevitable."

Once you finally start, after waiting on who knows how many technical problems, you are treated to an hour or more of grainy photos and awkward, obvious bullet points, Carmona said.

Servicemembers said that not all presentations are bad. Those that use a few simple bullet points and photos to illustrate a succinct message get it right. But too often, servicemembers without any real training in presentations work off a template and put gobs of material in a tiny font on an overhead screen.

Marine Sgt. Courtney White, of Marine Corps Recruiting Command, cited too much text,

A PowerPoint slide from the "Military Industrial PowerPoint Complex" collection at the Internet Archive displays a whole lot of information for an overhead presentation. Random military slides will be part of a "Military PowerPoint Karaoke" event in San Francisco in March.

monotone presenters who read verbatim from the slides and outdated clip art or videos as particular problems.

White recalls an especially grueling presentation with multiple PowerPoint points back-to-back on the same day in which several Marines had to stand up in the back of the room to attempt to stay awake.

"It was very rough," White said.

Annual training requirements like sexual assault awareness and suicide prevention are particularly bad presentations, said Marine Sgt. Ruben Poot, a Marine Corps Recruit Station Twin Cities, because they repeat the same information every time.

While he acknowledges the information is important, being forced to sit through the same presentation "is basically death by PowerPoint" for the Marines in the audience, he said.

Presenters at the upcoming karaoke event in San Francisco will have more than 5,700 presentations

U.S. Army

An old PowerPoint slide from the military collection displays questionable judgment from the "don't ask, don't tell" era.

to choose from.

"Once you finish one, there is another right behind it, and they just keep coming in an endless

cycle," Army veteran Jonathan Ryan said.

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Navy: Some sailors see appeal in announced change

FROM FRONT PAGE

sea time on their prescribed tour length waived and would be guaranteed shore duty for their next assigned tour.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Amaechi McMillan, a culinary specialist aboard the Ronald Reagan who's set to transfer this summer, said he would have extended his tour in Japan in exchange for shore duty on his next rotation if he had the opportunity. "It is beneficial to someone in my shoes because in my rate, you don't get shore duty until [you have served] five years," he said.

Additionally, sailors extending their tours by a year or more will be given preferential consideration for announced billets in the Career Management System/Interactive Detailing, a web-based system used to view and apply for jobs.

If multiple preferential applications are made for the same ad-

vertised billet, the best qualified member will be selected," the Navy said.

Seaman Apprentice Yunior Castano Perez, a hospital apprentice at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, said having a better chance of getting his desired duty station would persuade him to double his current two-year tour.

"I would like to pick somewhere outside the U.S. to get to explore," he said. "I want to see the world."

Sailors who extend their tours for at least a year will still have the option to receive Sea Duty Incentive Pay, the Navy said. The armed forces-wide Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program also remains an option for eligible sailors.

"Our goal is to reward those sailors who volunteer to extend to meet the demands from the fleet," said Rear Adm. John Meier, director of the Career Management Department.

ment for the Navy Personnel Command. "In addition to the incentives already in place, which remain options for sailors who meet extension criteria, these additional incentives should make it easier for sailors who make the decision to extend."

For some sailors, the incentives may not be enough. Petty Officer 2nd Class Meagan Yarger is already on shore duty at the Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station Yokosuka. She said she is not happy overseas and would not extend her current three-year tour.

"I'll still be leaving. I can't talk to [Japanese-speaking] neighbors; I don't like using yen," she said. "The Navy is not for me."

During a talk in January with sailors and family members at Yokosuka Naval Station in Japan, Vice Adm. Robert Burke, chief of naval personnel and deputy chief of naval operations, said tour lengths of four

years could become mandatory.

Many overseas tours for military personnel are capped at two or three years and that has contributed to the forward fleet's crisis.

"A sailor gets [to Japan and] they're taking 14 to 18 months to learn their training and then maybe doing their job for a short month's period of time before it's time for them to move again," Burke said. "That puts the commands in a state of continuously having to train up their people and not having a seasoned, experienced crew that can train up the new junior folks."

Sailors interested in any of the incentives must request an extension 14 to 18 months before their projected rotation date, the Navy said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Tyler Hliavac contributed to this report.
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US, Israeli troops to train on missile defense

More than 2,000 U.S. troops will take up positions in Israel next month for a missile defense exercise designed to test the ability of American and Israeli systems to operate together.

U.S. European Command and the Israeli Defense Forces will take part in the combined drills known as Juniper Guard on March 4-15.

"The Juniper Guard exercises continue to strengthen this relationship, providing us with the opportunity to bolster interoperability and develop seamless integration with our Israeli partners," said U.S. 3rd Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Richard Clark, who also serves as the commander for the deploying Joint Task Force-Israel.

The exercise will involve more than 2,500 U.S. personnel, operating both ashore and afloat, EUFOR said. A similar number of IDF personnel also will take part in the exercises.

From staff reports

NATION

Trump endorses increased age limit for more weapons

By CATHERINE LUCEY
AND MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump endorsed stricter gun control measures Thursday, including raising the minimum age to 21 for possessing a broader range of weapons than at present. He tweeted his strongest stance as president one day after an emotional White House session in which students and parents poured out wrenching tales of lost lives and pleaded for action.

Trump said on Twitter: "I will be strongly pushing Comprehensive Background Checks with an emphasis on Mental Health Raise age to 21 and end sale of Bump Stocks!"

He did not immediately offer more details.

The current federal minimum age for buying or possessing handguns is 21, but the limit is 18 for rifles, including assault-type weapons such as the AR-15 used by a former student in last week's attack on a Florida high school that killed 17 students and staff

members.

A White House official said the president was not endorsing or ruling out any specific policy.

In another tweet, Trump repeated his urgent call for trained teachers or others in schools to carry guns as a deterrent to attacks.

"If a potential 'sicko shooter' knows that a school has a large number of very weapons talented teachers (and others) who will be instantly shooting, the sicko will NEVER attack that school. Cowards won't go there...problem solved. Must be offensive, defense alone won't work!" Trump wrote.

He previously has expressed an interest in efforts to strengthen the federal background check system. It was not clear if he would back closing loopholes that permit loose, private sales of the internet and at gun shows.

On Wednesday, Trump listened intently at the White House as students described the horror of the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in

Parkland, Fla. The students and their parents appealed to him to press for stricter gun controls.

"I turned 18 the day after" the shooting, said tearful student Samuel Zeif. "Woke up to the news that my best friend was gone. And I don't understand why I can still go in a store and buy a weapon of war. An AR. How is it that easy to buy this type of weapon? How do we not stop this after Columbine? After Sandy Hook?"

Trump promised to be "very strong on background checks." And he indicated he supported allowing some teachers and other school employees to carry concealed weapons to be ready for intruders.

The president had invited the teen survivors of school violence and parents of murdered children in a show of his resolve against gun violence in the wake of last week's shootings in Florida and in past years at schools in Connecticut and Colorado.

Trump asked his guests to suggest solutions and solicited feedback. He did not fully endorse



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

any specific policy solution, but pledged to take action and expressed interest in widely differing approaches.

He largely listened, holding handwritten notes bearing his message to the families. "I hear you" was written in black marker.

Besides considering concealed carrying of weapons by trained school employees, a concept he has endorsed in the past, he said he planned to go "very strongly into age, age of purchase." And he said he was committed to improving background checks and working on mental health.

Most in the group Wednesday were emotional but quiet and polite.

But Andrew Pollack, whose daughter, Meadow, was killed last week, noted the previous school massacres and raged over his loss, saying this moment isn't about gun laws but about fixing the schools.

"It should have been one school shooting, and we should have fixed it, and I'm pissed. Because my daughter, I'm not going to see again," said Pollack. "King David Cemetery, that is where I go to see my kid now."

Fla. students pushing gun regulations face pushback

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON,
GARY FINEOUT AND TERRY SPENCER
Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — The students who swarmed Florida's state capitol in the wake of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High massacre want the Legislature to enact stricter limits on guns. What that might entail remains debatable — if any changes are forthcoming at all.

The 100 Stoneman Douglas survivors who traveled 400 miles to Tallahassee were welcomed into the gun-friendly halls of power Wednesday, but the students' top goal — a ban on assault-style rifles such as the weapon used in the massacre — was taken off the table a day earlier, although more limited measures are still possible.

Republican legislative leaders say they will consider legislation that likely will call for raising the age limit to purchase a rifle from 18 to 21 and increasing funding for mental health programs and school resource officers, the police assigned to specific schools.

Lawmakers also are considering a program promoted by one Florida sheriff that calls for deputizing someone to carry a weapon on campus. Legislators may also enact a waiting period for rifle purchases.

The suspect, Nikolas Cruz, 19, has been jailed on 17 counts of murder and has admitted the Feb. 14 attack. Defense attorneys, state records and people who know him indicate that he displayed behavioral troubles for years, including getting kicked



MICHAEL LAUGHLIN, (DEERFIELD BEACH) SOUTH FLORIDA SUN-SENTINEL/AP

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students are recognized Wednesday before a CNN town hall broadcast at the BB&T Center in Sunrise, Fla.

out of the Parkland school. He owned a collection of weapons.

"How is it possible that this boy that we all knew was clearly disturbed was able to get an assault rifle, military grade, and come to our school and try to kill us?" one 16-year-old student asked the president of the state Senate, Joe Negron.

Negron did not answer directly. "That's an issue that we're reviewing," he said.

Outside the capitol building Wednesday, many protesters complained that lawmakers were not serious about reform, and they said they would oppose in future elections any legislator who accepts campaign contributions from the National Rifle Association.

"We've spoken to only a few legislators and ... the most we've gotten out of them is, 'We'll keep you in our thoughts. You are so strong. You are so powerful,'" said Delaney Tarr, a senior at the high school. "We know what we want. We want gun reform. We want commonsense gun laws. ... We

want change."

She added, "We've had enough of thoughts and prayers. If you supported us, you would have made a change long ago. So this is to every lawmaker out there: No longer can you take money from the NRA. We are coming after you. We are coming after every single one of you, demanding that you take action."

The crowd burst into chants of "Vote them out!" as speakers called for the removal of Republican lawmakers who refuse to address gun control issues. One sign read, "Remember the men who value the NRA over children's lives" and then listed Republicans in Florida's congressional delegation. Other signs said, "Kill the NRA, not our kids" and "These kids are braver than the GOP."

About 30 people left an anti-gun rally outside Florida's Old Capitol and began a sit-in protest at the office of four House Republican leaders, demanding a conversation about gun legislation.

Sen. Rubio says he would support raising age for buying rifles

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — On the defensive after the Florida school shooting rampage that killed 17, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., an ardent gun rights advocate, said he would support raising the age to buy rifles and other restrictions.

Rubio faced angry students, teachers and parents demanding stronger gun-control measures at a town hall meeting Wednesday in Florida.

Rubio, the lone Republican at CNN's "Stand Up" town hall Wednesday night, said he would support laws barring those 18 and younger from buying rifles, changing the background-checks system and getting rid of bump stocks, which allow semiautomatic guns to mimic fully automatic fire.

Rubio is backed by the influential National Rifle Association, which has awarded him an A-plus rating and has endorsed his Senate candidacy in the past. President Donald Trump said this week he would support similar restrictions.

One of those confronting Rubio on Wednesday night was Fred Guttenberg, whose daughter, Jaime, 14, was killed Feb. 14 with 16 others. Rubio was the only Republican at the nationally broadcast gathering after Florida's Republican Gov. Rick Scott and Trump declined invitations to appear at the event in Sunrise.

People stood up and cheered Guttenberg as he challenged the Florida senator to tell him the truth, to acknowledge that "guns were the factor in the hunting of our kids."

Rubio responded that the problems laid bare by the shooting rampage "cannot be solved by gun laws alone," drawing jeering whistles from the crowd.

NATION

Students walk out to protest gun violence

Associated Press

In a wave of demonstrations reaching from Arizona to Maine, students at dozens of U.S. high schools walked out of class Wednesday to protest gun violence and honor the victims of last week's deadly shooting in Florida.

The protests spread from school to school as students shared plans for their demonstrations over social media. Many lasted 17 minutes in honor of the 17 people killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.

Hundreds of students from Maryland schools left class to rally at the U.S. Capitol. Hundreds more filed out of their schools in cities from Chicago to Pittsburgh to Austin, Texas, often at the lunch hour. Thousands walked out in Florida.

At the protest in Washington, students held a moment of silence in memory of those killed in Parkland and listened as the names of the dead were recited. Daniel Gelillo, a senior at Richard Montgomery High in Rockville, Md., helped organize the protest and said students aimed to pressure lawmakers to act on gun control.

Up until now, he said, nothing has quite fazed them. "The Orlando

shooting, Las Vegas and now Parkland," he said. "Something has to happen. Innocent people are dying because of the easy access to firearms in this country."

At Dublin Scioto High School near Columbus, Ohio, about 200 students sat outside in silence for 17 minutes and wrote notes of support that will be mailed to survivors of the Florida shooting. Afterward, they gathered in a circle to discuss how they could push for stronger gun control.

"No child should have to go to school and be scared for their life," said Daviyana Warren, 15, a sophomore at the school who walked out.

While some groups have worked to organize national demonstrations in the coming weeks, students say gatherings Wednesday were mostly impromptu and organized out of a sense of urgency to find solutions to gun violence.

Many of the protests were accompanied by chants of "Never again," which has been a rallying cry since the Florida shooting.

"These gun deaths are happening like every day, and we're not doing anything to change it. It's ridiculous," said Rebecca Parch, a student who organized a walkout



MIKE CHRISTY, ARIZONA DAILY STAR/AP

City High School juniors Ella Dunkle, left, and Samantha Zazueta sit in silent protest Tuesday during a peaceful walkout march to the federal courthouse building in downtown Tucson, Ariz.

at Lakewood High School, near Cleveland. "It's just too many lives lost, and I think that teenagers are just done with it now."

Students at her school and others called for limits on AR-15 rifles, the weapon authorities say Nikolas Cruz, 19, legally bought and used in the Florida attack. Teens at some schools called for a ban on the AR-15 and similar rifles among civilians, saying they should be reserved for military use.

Principals at some schools allowed the protests and promised not to punish students for leaving class. Parch said the administration

at her school vowed to join students in similar demonstrations in the future. But some districts threatened to discipline those who joined the wave of walkouts.

Superintendent Curtis Rhodes, of Texas' Needville Independent School District, said students who left class would be suspended for three days, even with permission from their parents.

Similar walkouts already are being planned, including on March 14, one month after the Florida shooting, and on April 20, the anniversary of the Columbine High School massacre in Colorado.

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STARS AND STRIPES.

GOP lawmaker: 'Many' mass murderers are Democrats

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — A Republican congresswoman from upstate New York said Wednesday that "many" people who commit mass murder turn out to be Democrats.

U.S. Rep. Claudia Tenney made the remarks on Talk 1300 Radio during a discussion about calls for stricter gun control since last week's deadly Florida high school shooting.

"Yeah, well, obviously there is a lot of politics in it, and it's interesting that so many of these people that commit the mass murders end up being Democrats, but the media doesn't talk about that either," Tenney told talk show host Fred Dicker. Tenney did not offer any evidence to support that statement.

Democratic state Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, who is opposing Tenney this fall, called her comments "disgusting" and "toxic" and urged her to apologize.

In a statement Wednesday night, Tenney said her comments were taken out of context. "I am fed up with the media and liberals attempting to politicize tragedies and demonize law-abiding gun owners and conservative Americans every time there is a horrible tragedy."

NATION

Iowa congressman failed to disclose role in new firm

BY RYAN J. FOLEY
Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — A congressman from Iowa violated House ethics rules by failing to disclose his ownership role in a new company, a mysterious outfit that featured his top federal staffer in a false testimonial promoting its services, an Associated Press review shows.

Rep. Rod Blum was one of two directors of the Tin Moon Corp. when the internet marketing company was incorporated in May 2016 as the Republican was serving his first term, a business filing shows. Among other services, Tin Moon promises to help companies cited for federal food and drug safety violations bury their Food and Drug Administration warning letters below positive internet search results.

Democratic candidates running to unseat Blum and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee seized on the AP's findings to attack him for what they called serious ethical lapses and demanded a House investigation.

Blum said in a statement Wednesday evening that he made an "oversight" in failing to disclose his ties to the company on his personal financial disclosure covering calendar year 2016, which he submitted last August. He said he was amending the form to list his role as director of the company and Tin Moon as an asset, even while he downplayed the significance of the matter.

"This is a textbook case of making a mountain out of a mole-

hill for political gain," Blum said. "While I regret this administration oversaw, I will not concede to the narrative that this is some sort of scandal."

Tin Moon's website on Tuesday removed an official photo of Blum wearing his congressional pin and changed his title from CEO to "majority shareholder" after the AP raised questions about ethics rules. Tin Moon is based in the same Dubuque office as a construction software company Blum owns, Digital Canal.

Late Wednesday, the company also removed an online video testimonial showing "John Ferland representing Digital Canal" and claiming to be a satisfied customer Ferland — who is actually chief of staff in Blum's congressional office and has never worked for Digital Canal — claimed that Tin Moon is "saving us thousands of dollars every month, keeping our traffic and leads higher," and implored, "From one business owner to another, I suggest you take a look at Tin Moon."

Blum didn't list his positions as director or CEO of Tin Moon on his personal financial disclosure for 2016, despite House rules that require members to identify all corporate positions they held during any part of the year even if they're unpaid.

Blum initially told the AP he didn't consider the company an asset because it was "worth zero" and "not a functioning company in 2016." Ferland's testimonial was uploaded in September 2016; a YouTube user named "rodblum" uploaded a similar Tin Moon testimonial two weeks earlier.

and a young woman in a fellowship with another lawmaker.

Several accusations against Mendoza first became public last fall in a report by the Sacramento Bee. Under pressure from other lawmakers, Mendoza took a leave of absence. The Senate Rules Committee suspended him in late January — days before he was set to return from leave — because the independent investigation had not yet concluded.

Mendoza sued for reinstatement last week, alleging, among other arguments, that the suspension was unconstitutional.

In a letter pleading his case to colleagues Wednesday, the Los Angeles-area Democrat said he was sorry if anyone was offended by his behavior but continued to defend himself on the Senate floor.

Lawyers investigating complaints against Mendoza, who is 46 and married, found that he likely engaged in unwanted "flirtatious or sexually suggestive" behavior with six women, including four subordinates, a lobbyist



STEVE MELLON, PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE/AP

Shannon Edwards announces her campaign to run for the U.S. House of Representatives on the grand staircase of the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh on Wednesday.

Woman in affair that led House member to resign seeks office

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — A woman whose affair with a married, eight-term Pennsylvania congressman led to his resignation said Wednesday she is pursuing her own run for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Shannon Edwards, 33, announced in a statement that she is seeking the Republican nomination to take on Democratic Pittsburgh U.S. Rep. Mike Doyle. It was first reported by The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Republican Rep. Tim Murphy, an outspoken opponent of abortion rights, resigned in October after the newspaper reported that text messages suggested he wanted Edwards to get an abortion when they thought she might be pregnant.

Edwards is running in a neighboring district.

The Post-Gazette reported that a text from Edwards said Murphy had "zero issue" posting your

pro-life stance all over the place when you had no issue asking me to abort our unborn child just last week when we thought that was one of the options."

A text reply from Murphy's number said staff was responsible for his anti-abortion messages: "I've never written them. Staff does them. I read them and winced. I told staff don't write any more."

Murphy had a 100 percent anti-abortion voting record in Congress.

A special election to fill the unexpired portion of Murphy's term is March 13, pitting Democrat Conor Lamb against GOP state Rep. Rick Saccone.

Edwards told the paper she does not regret her relationship with Murphy.

She met Murphy at a convention in 2015 and then offered to work with him on legislation to improve how Medicaid reimburses psychiatric hospitals

and to establish an official at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to oversee how mental health funds are spent. Both are psychologists.

"We worked very closely on legislation that did a lot for my patients and clients. I can't rewrite the past, and I don't know what other course it could have gone," she told the Post-Gazette.

Murphy, who had been in Congress since 2002, resigned in October, days after the newspaper first disclosed the texts. He apologized and asked for privacy for his family.

Their affair became public during Edwards' own divorce proceedings.

Edwards, a native of Cranberry, Pa., has worked as a forensic psychologist with family and criminal courts.

The Post-Gazette described Edwards as a former political independent who is now a registered Republican.

Calif. Senate to weigh punishment for member accused of misconduct

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The California Senate is expected to debate punishment for a lawmaker accused of sexual misconduct Thursday, including what could be the first expulsion in more than a century.

The highly unusual session comes a day after Republicans and Democrats met separately in secret caucus meetings to decide the appropriate discipline for Sen. Tony Mendoza, who plans to defend himself on the Senate floor.

Lawyers investigating complaints against Mendoza, who is 46 and married, found that he likely engaged in unwanted "flirtatious or sexually suggestive" behavior with six women, including four subordinates, a lobbyist

Mueller files new, sealed charges in case involving Manafort and Gates

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller has filed new charges in the case against onetime Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort and his former deputy, Rick Gates, according to a sealed court filing.

The filing in Washington federal court doesn't specify the nature of the charges, or whether it expanded the case against both men or added others. They were indicted in October on charges of

money laundering and failing to register for political consulting work performed in Ukraine.

Earlier this week, Mueller's office announced a guilty plea by a London-based lawyer who worked with Manafort and Gates on a report that largely defended the conviction of a former Ukrainian prime minister despite widespread criticism that it was politically motivated.

Mueller's office hinted at possible new charges in a separate filing last week. In that document

opposing more lenient bail terms, prosecutors said Manafort engaged in a "series of bank frauds and bank fraud conspiracies" not previously charged. Those frauds relate to a mortgage on a Virginia property that Manafort seeks to pledge to secure his \$10 million bail, according to the filing.

He "provided the bank with doctored profit and loss statements" from his company for 2015 and 2016, while "overstating its income by millions of dollars," prosecutors said.

NATION



PHOTOS BY TERESA CRAWFORD/AP

Bill Guronick rides his bike near his Northbrook, Ill., home Tuesday. Guronick, 86, is participating in a study that researchers hope will help them understand why some older people keep a sharp memory.

Brains of 'superagers' offer clues for sharp memory in old age

By LAURAN NEERGAARD

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It's pretty extraordinary for people in their 80s and 90s to keep the same sharp memory as someone several decades younger, and now scientists are peeking into the brains of these "superagers" to uncover their secret.

The work is the flip side of the disappointing hunt for new drugs to fight or prevent Alzheimer's disease.

Instead, "why don't we figure out what it is we might need to do to maximize our memory?" said neuroscientist Emily Rogalski, who leads the Super-Aging study at Chicago's Northwestern University.

Parts of the brain shrink with age, one of the reasons why most people experience a gradual slowing of at least some types of memory late in life, even if they avoid diseases like Alzheimer's.

But it turns out that superagers' brains aren't shrinking nearly as fast as their peers'. And autopsies of the first superagers to die during the study show they harbor a lot more of a special kind of nerve cell in a deep brain region that's important for attention, Rogalski told a recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

What does it take to be a superager? A youthful brain in the body of someone 80 or older. The



Guronick and his wife, Peggy Bartelstein, walk in Northbrook.

study's key memory challenge: Listen to 15 unrelated words, and a half-hour later recall at least nine. That's the norm for 50-year-olds, but the average 80-year-old recalls five. Some superagers remember them all.

"It doesn't mean you're any smarter," stressed superager Bill Guronick, 86. He joined the study two years ago and thinks his memory is bolstered by keeping busy.

"Absolutely that's a critical factor about keeping your wits about you," Guronick said.

the streets of the city's Lincoln Park neighborhood next to an elementary-age children and several of his fellow dealers.

"I only made it that way because that's what my audience wanted to hear," said Schofield, who rapped under the name "Big Face Dolla." "They call it trap rap."

"Trap" is a common term for a place where drugs are sold.

Schofield, 33, was sentenced Wednesday to 24 years in federal prison for distributing more than

Weinstein uses actresses' comments in his defense

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Harvey Weinstein wants a judge to dismiss a federal sexual misconduct lawsuit against him and invoked the words and actions of Oscar-winning actresses including Meryl Streep in his defense.

Lawyers for the disgraced film mogul said Tuesday in federal court in New York that the proposed class-action lawsuit filed by six women should be rejected because the alleged assaults took place too long ago and they failed to offer facts to support claims of racketeering.

Weinstein was one of the most powerful men in the movie industry before allegations that began emerging in October dethroned him and unleashed a torrent of sexual misconduct accusations that spread far beyond the entertainment industry.

His lawyers cited comments made by Streep in a statement she released last October saying Weinstein had always been respectful in their working relationship.

In a blistering response Wednesday, she said misusing her statement "as evidence that he was not abusive with many OTHER women is pathetic and exploitative."

"The criminal actions he is accused of conducting on the bodies of these women are his responsibility," Streep continued, "and if there is any justice left in the system he will pay for them."

The lawsuit, which could potentially involve hundreds of other women, said Weinstein assaulted young women trying to break into Hollywood when they were alone with him and that his former film companies operated like an organized crime group to conceal widespread sexual harassment and assaults.

Saying that the proposed class of affected women was "fatally overbroad," lawyers for Weinstein said the suit would include all women Weinstein ever met, whether they even claimed to be harmed. The filing written by Phyllis Kupferstein and Mary Flynn also questioned the verac-

ity of claims that the women who sued were under duress because of threats Weinstein made if they complained. It cited Gwyneth Paltrow as an example, saying she worked with Weinstein and won an Oscar for "Shakespeare in Love" in 1998 after he was accused of harassing her during the filming of "Emma" in 1994.

Attorney Elizabeth Fegan, who filed the lawsuit on behalf of six actresses, said her team looks forward to showing that "Weinstein and his enablers should be held responsible for decades of assaults and cover-ups."

"If Weinstein thinks he will win by twisting women's words against them, he fails to understand the law on sexual assault and the depravity of his own conduct," Fegan wrote in reply to an email.

If Weinstein thinks he will win by twisting women's words against them, he fails to understand the law on sexual assault and the depravity of his own conduct," Fegan wrote in reply to an email.

At least 75 women have told the news media that Weinstein harassed, behaved inappropriately toward them or assaulted them. Authorities in Los Angeles; Beverly Hills, Calif.; New York, and London are investigating.

Charges: Minneapolis father beat and raped disabled twin daughters

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A 51-year-old Minneapolis man is accused of beating his mentally disabled twin daughters, raping them and chaining them to a bedroom door in a case described as torture.

The man was charged this week with several felonies, including first-degree criminal sexual conduct, first- and second-degree assault and abuse of a vulnerable adult by a caregiver. He is jailed on \$750,000 bail, with his first court appearance scheduled Thursday.

The Star Tribune reported that charges and a protective order against the suspect reveal he fathered two children by one of the twins.

The Associated Press is not

naming the father to avoid identifying the women, who are now in their early 20s.

Authorities said the man was upset that one of the twins had become sexually active and felt they were eating too much.

One of the twins escaped to alert authorities last May. County human services officials a short time later removed the other twin and a younger sister from the family's home.

Child safety experts who examined the twins soon after they were removed from their parents' care concluded that their injuries were "clinically diagnostic of torture."

In a petition for a protection order that a Hennepin County judge granted in June, the twin who was impregnated twice said

she did not "ever remember having enough food."

"He forced me to have sex, (and) he has done this to me every day since I was (in my) early teens or so," the twin's account continued. "He did this to my twin sister also."

According to the complaint, the other twin, identified as Victim A, said that once her parents realized she was "sexually active," her father repeatedly put a dog chain tightly around one or both ankles and connected it to the parents' bedroom door "to prevent her from seeing men" and to deny her food. The twin said her father would beat her while she was bound, and that her twin, referred to as Victim B, was also chained.

Va. rapper who bragged in video about being a drug dealer gets 24 years

The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot

NORFOLK, Va. — Standing in a federal courtroom Wednesday, the Portsmouth, Va., rapper tried to distance himself from the music video that he once hoped would make him a star.

Rhadu Schofield said he no longer liked the song "Dumb Hard," which focused on all the work he was putting in on the streets of Portsmouth selling drugs. And he said he didn't like watching the YouTube video, which featured him rapping in

the streets of the city's Lincoln Park neighborhood next to an elementary-age children and several of his fellow dealers.

"I only made it that way because that's what my audience wanted to hear," said Schofield, who rapped under the name "Big Face Dolla." "They call it trap rap."

"Trap" is a common term for a place where drugs are sold.

Schofield, 33, was sentenced Wednesday to 24 years in federal prison for distributing more than

1 kilogram of heroin.

According to court documents and prosecutors, Schofield was part of a large drug-trafficking organization based in Portsmouth. The documents say the group was headed by Leroy Perdue, a relative of Schofield, and several other members.

Eleven other members of the conspiracy have pleaded guilty over the past six months to various crimes. Charges remain pending against only Perdue. His jury trial is set to start May 22.

The drug ring was responsible for putting more than 100 kilograms of heroin on the streets of Portsmouth over the past decade, prosecutors have said. That is more than 250,000 doses.

Prosecutors said Perdue secured the heroin from a supplier in New York, sometimes with the help of Schofield. They said Schofield served as Perdue's chief lieutenant and the "face of the operation."

Assistant U.S. Attorney William Jackson argued for Schofield to

receive a sentence of 27 years, in part because of the video he recorded in 2016 with the help of Perdue. He described the song as "essentially a confession."

"He's legitimizing his operation and making it 'cool,'" Jackson said of Schofield, who he called a "local celebrity."

Defense attorney Andrew Sacks asked for a sentence of 10 years, the minimum allowed. He said his client's first toys were drug capsules — and that his life didn't get any better from there.

NATION



BECKY MALEWITZ, SOUTH BEND (IND.) TRIBUNE/AP

Emergency crews help evacuate residents Wednesday in Elkhart, Ind. Crews are using boats to help northern Indiana residents amid flooding from melting snow and heavy rain moving across the Midwest.



ROBERT FRANKLIN, SOUTH BEND (IND.) TRIBUNE/AP

Wide swath of US under flood warning

Associated Press

ELKHART, Ind. — Shelters were open Thursday to assist people forced from their homes by flooding in the Midwest as rivers swollen by heavy rain and melting snow continue to rise in Indiana, Michigan and other states.

Flood warnings were in effect across a wide swath of the central and southern U.S. from Wisconsin, Illinois and Ohio to Texas and Louisiana. The American Red Cross said it has opened eight shelters in northern Indiana, where crews used boats to help residents evacuate their homes.

In Elkhart and nearby Goshen, local officials declared a state of emergency and asked that traffic be limited to first responders and emergency personnel. Indiana University-South Bend canceled Thursday classes, and residents of a student apartment complex were encouraged to leave.

"I ended up grabbing my favorite blanket and stuffed animals," Madison Schmidt, 15, who was evacuated from her home in Elkhart to a shelter at the church, told The Elkhart Truth newspaper. "I got into the boat. Seeing what happened just almost made me cry."

In Michigan, states of emergency were declared in the Lansing area as officials recommended the

evacuations of several neighborhoods. City officials said anyone living in the possible flood areas should temporarily leave their home by midday Thursday.

"While the rain has stopped, we are expecting significant flooding," Lansing Mayor Andy Schor said.

Flooding also hit nearby Michigan State University, where some roads, parking lots and athletic fields were covered by water from the Red Cedar River that runs through its East Lansing campus. Classes in several buildings have been relocated and the school put up sand-filled barriers in an attempt to curb flooding.

"Be careful if you're trying to come to campus," Schor said Wednesday, noting that the river was at its highest levels since 1975. "Changing conditions are affecting not only the roads but sidewalks and walkways."

The National Weather Service predicted the Grand River in Lansing would crest by late Thursday at 14.6 feet, nearly 3 feet above flood stage. The Red Cedar River was forecast to crest at 10.3 feet.

The storm system started pushing heavy rain, snow and ice into the region this week, affecting roads and other low-lying areas. The weather was blamed for hundreds of car crashes and several deaths, including a crash that



BEN MIKESELL, THE (GOSHEN, IND.) NEWS/AP

killed four people along a slippery interstate in Nebraska.

In central Michigan's Fairplain Township, a 1-year-old girl was found dead Wednesday in standing water from rains and snowmelt in her backyard.

Homes and streets also were flooded in the South Bend area of Indiana, and forecasters predicted

that the swollen St. Joseph River wouldn't crest until Thursday.

Firefighters in Lake Station, Ind., about 30 miles southeast of Chicago, evacuated some residents Wednesday after 15 to 20 homes were surrounded by about 2 to 3 feet of water.

In Illinois, authorities issued an evacuation order Wednesday for

residents in the city of Marseilles who live near the Illinois River.

Fear of the rising river also prompted the evacuation of a nursing home in Ottawa.

Two days of rain in southern Wisconsin swelled waterways, leading to a handful of high-water rescues for people stranded in their vehicles.

Pa. congressional redistricting issue reaches Supreme Court

By MARK SCOLFORO
Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — A request by Republican leaders in the Pennsylvania Legislature to stop a new congressional map from being implemented is now in the hands of the nation's highest court.

The filing made late Wednesday asked Justice Samuel Alito to intervene, saying the state Supreme Court overstepped its authority in imposing a new map.

More litigation may follow, as Republi-

cans are considering a separate legal challenge in federal court in Harrisburg this week.

The state Supreme Court last month threw out a Republican-crafted map that was considered among the nation's most gerrymandered, saying the 2011 plan violated the state constitution's guarantee of free and equal elections.

The new map the state justices announced Monday is widely viewed as giving Democrats an edge as they seek to recapture enough U.S. House seats to re-

claim the majority.

House Speaker Mike Turzai and Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati said the state's highest court made an unprecedented decision.

"The Pennsylvania Supreme Court conspicuously seized the redistricting process and prevented any meaningful ability for the Legislature to enact a remedial map to ensure a court drawn map," they wrote in a filing made electronically after business hours.

The challenge adds uncertainty as can-

didates are preparing to circulate nominating petitions to get their names on the May primary ballot.

It is the third time in four months that Turzai and Scarnati have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to put a halt to litigation over the 2011 map they took leading roles in creating.

As a sign of the litigation's potential impact on national politics, President Donald Trump on Tuesday via Twitter urged Republicans to press their challenge of the map to the U.S. Supreme Court.

NATION

Former Ark. judge gets 5-year term in sexual favors case

By KELLY P. KISSEL
Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A federal judge sentenced a former Arkansas judge Wednesday to five years in prison — a stiffer punishment than prosecutors recommended — after he admitted giving young, male defendants lighter sentences in return for personal benefits that included sexual favors.

The lawyer for Joseph Boeckmann, 72, had wanted home detention, and prosecutors said he should go to prison for just over three years. After hearing from two of the ex-judge's victims, U.S. District Judge Kristine Baker said she had no choice but to impose an even longer sentence.

"He acted corruptly while serving as a judge. When his back was against the wall, he obstructed justice," Baker said. "That sets his crime apart."

Prosecutors said Boeckmann's pattern of misbehavior dated at least to the 1990s, when he was investigated while a part-time deputy Cross County prosecutor. Federal prosecutors decided against charging him after he agreed to give up his post in 1998.

Richard Milliman, of Memphis, Tenn., became one of Boeckmann's victims after being stopped for driving 5 mph over the speed limit four years ago. Then forgetting his trial date. The judge summoned Milliman to his house and took photos of him from behind as he picked up cans under the guise of performing community service, then shot photos of some of Milliman's tattoos.

Milliman, then 23, said he refused to pose David-like, even though he was offered \$300 to mimic the Michelangelo work.

"I've never felt more betrayed

by the justice system," Milliman told Baker, imploring her to impose a longer sentence than the 30- to 37-month term called for in federal sentencing guidelines. "How can a mere 37 months be a means to pay back society?"

Boeckmann sat with his lips pursed at the defense table.

Prosecutors said the number of victims could be in the dozens or hundreds. Typically, the former district court judge dismissed traffic citations and misdemeanors in exchange for "community service" that, in some cases, required young men to submit to photographs in compromising positions and in others required sexually related conduct.

Kyle Butler said he also was forced to pose for photos and was threatened with his life if he didn't recant information he had given to state investigators.

In a letter written before Wednesday's hearing — a portion of which was read to the judge — Butler said that after Boeckmann had helped him following a traffic accident, the judge required him to routinely clean up a laptop computer that had been slowed down by a cache of X-rated pictures and videos.

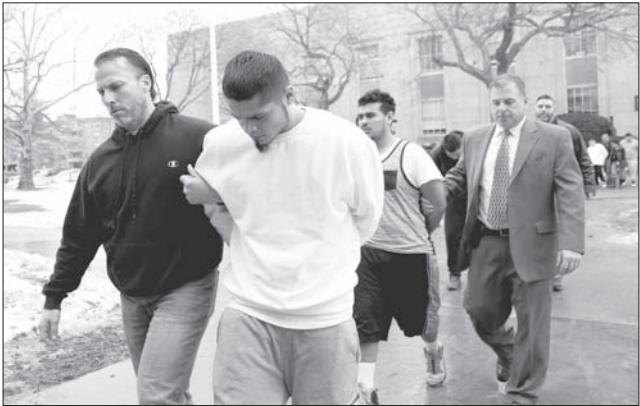
"I had to do as he said. He held all the keys to my freedom," Butler said.

Boeckmann's lawyer did not warn the judge to consider the 1990s investigations, saying the ex-judge's memory was such that he couldn't refute any allegations. Baker said she found the misconduct pertinent, given that FBI agents were told then by Boeckmann's secretary about her finding nude photographs of young men in his office.

The ex-judge spoke to Baker briefly and in a barely audible voice said he had tried to convince himself that he wasn't doing anything wrong. He later added, "I've had time to reflect."

Boeckmann had faced up to 260 years behind bars if convicted of all charges in the 21-count indictment. He pleaded guilty last year to mail fraud and witness tampering.

They won't divulge their ages, immigration status or current whereabouts. And while they say



SETH WENIG/AP

Suspected members of the MS-13 gang are escorted to their arraignment Jan. 11 in Mineola, N.Y.



Boeckmann

MS-13 sweep keeps even most basic details secret

By TOM HAYS
AND COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was a tally so impressive that President Donald Trump touted it at his State of the Union address: Since May, agents cracking down on the violent gang terrorizing the working-class suburbs of Long Island had swept up 428 gang suspects, including 220 members of the notorious MS-13.

But the sweep called "Operation Matador" also has been shrouded in secrecy. Federal and state authorities have declined repeated requests from The Associated Press for even basic information made public in most law enforcement operations, such as the names of those arrested and the crimes they are accused of committing.

The lack of transparency comes amid accusations by immigration rights groups that the government is using unsubstantiated rumors of gang affiliations to detain people who are wholly innocent. Federal immigration judges already have ordered the release of some detainees arrested on suspicion of being MS-13 members when the government couldn't produce any evidence of gang activity.

Some parents and activists say some of those included in the tally are innocent teens who came to the U.S. as unaccompanied minors, spending weeks locked in maximum-security detention centers based on flimsy and false

allegations of gang activity. Civil liberties lawyers say that in some cases, their suspect "activity" was wearing a black T-shirt or making a hand gesture.

"They said: 'We have a warrant for your arrest and we don't have to explain anything to you now. We will tell you when you come with us,'" one teen, who asked not to be named because she is afraid of being deported, told the AP in Spanish. "Later, they told me I had been associated with gangs."

The teen said she was not a member of MS-13. She said she knew of people in MS-13, as do most people at Brentwood High School, a large high school 45 miles east of New York City. Maybe she's talked with some of them in the hallway.

Although she was released after two months in detention, she remains worried.

"I can't defend myself," she said. "I can't explain what happened because I don't even know who is accusing me."

Knowing police were on way, Calif. rape suspect ran, drank cyanide

By KYLE SWENSON
The Washington Post

The police were coming with questions about a 14-year-old girl, Snapchat and a motel room. Jonathan Hanks did not wait for the knock on his door.

Hanks, 33, from Camarillo, Calif., climbed behind the wheel of his black Nissan Versa on Wednesday morning, leaving his apartment before law enforcement arrived.

"We were planning on executing a search warrant and to take him into custody and arrest him," detective Ninette Toosby, a supervisor with the sex crimes division of the Los Angeles Police Department, told

the Ventura County Star. Instead, Southern California authorities were led on a chaotic, rush-hour car chase that ended with Hanks drinking a deadly dose of poison.

When he ran from his apartment, Hanks steered his Nissan onto the 101 Freeway. By 7:30 a.m., LAPD had alerted the California Highway Patrol that the suspect was running. He was located quickly as he headed north on the freeway in Ventura County, the Star reported. Hanks did not stop when officers flashed their lights. Police pursued the Nissan for 6 miles.

"Our primary officer observed him drinking something out of a large container," CHP Investigator Christopher Terry told NBC4 News. "He started driving a

little erratically."

Hanks' Nissan, which had been motoring up the 101's right-hand lane, then drifted across two lanes of traffic before bumping to a stop at the median dividing north- and southbound traffic. Police and emergency crews surrounded the car, spotting Hanks slumped over in the driver's seat.

According to the Star, one of the responding officers smashed open the Nissan's passenger window, pulling the suspect out of the vehicle. Hanks, however, was already dead. Inside the car, police discovered the container from which he had been drinking.

"It was tested by Ventura city fire department, their hazmat team," Terry ex-

plained to NBC4. "It was confirmed as sodium chloride and potassium cyanide."

Authorities have not revealed how Hanks was tipped off that police were set to make an arrest Wednesday morning.

According to the Star, one of the responding officers smashed open the Nissan's passenger window, pulling the suspect out of the vehicle. Hanks, however, was already dead. Inside the car, police discovered the container from which he had been drinking.

"There was physical evidence on her to substantiate the allegation," LAPD sex crimes supervisor Toosby told the paper. Hanks had no prior criminal record.

WORLD



PHOTOS BY MATT DUNHAM/AP

Volunteers pose with a Valentine's Day heart-shaped collection of plastic bottles made Feb. 9 from bottles that were lying on the north bank of the River Thames in London. Amid growing concern about waste in the oceans, conservation is becoming a selling point for businesses.

Big companies pledge to reduce use of plastic

BY DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON — Once a month, accountant Michael Byrne pulls on his rubber boots and makes his way to a spot on the banks of the River Thames.

He carefully marks out an 11-square-foot patch and, with gloved hands, catalogues each bit of plastic he finds, meticulously reporting the data to the environmental group Thames21. On Aug. 20, for example, he and other volunteers found an average of 31 food wrappers, the sticks from 29 cotton swabs, 12 bottle tops and about 100 pieces of small, chewed-up plastic in each patch.

"We are the data gatherers" who provide evidence of the plastic that's clogging the world's rivers and oceans, he said. "We are building up a picture all along the river of what is washing up."

Public awareness of the problem of plastic waste is swelling after alarming forecasts that there could be more plastic than fish in the oceans by 2050. Plus the shocking images are rolling in: Britain's Sky News' campaign against ocean plastic, featuring whales bloated by plastic bags; National Geographic's chilling picture of a seahorse curled around a pink cotton swab; and filmmaker David Attenborough's documentary "Blue Planet II" footage of sea

turtles shrouded in plastic.

And when consumers' attention goes, so does that of companies.

In the last few months, Avon, Evian, L'Oréal, Mars, M&S, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Walmart and WeWork & Mertz — which together use more than 6 million metric tons of plastic packaging per year — have committed to using only reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025, according to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, an innovation think-tank.

Adidas, meanwhile, is making a line of clothing from recycled plastic bottles and promoting the products with an online video underscoring the health threat to humans of ingesting plastic particles found in fish. Negozi Leggero, a high-end food store in Italy and Switzerland, features 1,500 package-free products. British supermarket chain Iceland is planning to remove all plastic packaging from its own-brand products by 2023.

"Some of the companies that might have been seen as the worst offenders are the ones moving forward," said Abigail Entwistle, of Fauna & Flora International, a 115-year-old conservation organization.

These are the companies, after all, that have profited from a business model that wraps everything from spring water to cleaning



Plastic bottles and other plastics including a mop lie on the banks of the River Thames.

products in plastic packaging that is used once and thrown away.

Global plastic production increased to 380 million metric tons in 2015 from 2 million metric tons in 1950, according to research by Roland Geyer, a professor of industrial ecology at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

About 60 percent of the 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic produced throughout history has ended up as waste, with more than three-fourths of that going to landfill or the natural environment, Geyer estimates. In 2010 alone, between 4 million and 12 billion metric tons of plastic entered the marine environment.

The material kills and maims wildlife and makes its way into the food chain.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation highlighted the issue last year in a report that said the weight of plastic in the oceans would equal that of fish by 2050 if current trends continue. Only 14 percent of plastic packaging is currently collected for recycling, according to the foundation, which works with companies like Google, Nike and Danone. Action is needed on multiple fronts, it says.

Governments and other institutions have also begun to focus on the issue.

The European Union has set a

provisional target to recycle 65 percent of urban waste by 2035.

Britain last year outlawed the use of plastic microbeads, and the government says it will consider taxes on single-use plastic as part of an effort to eliminate all "avoidable plastic waste" within 25 years.

The Church of England suggested its members reduce their plastic use for Lent.

Geyer said initiatives are nice, but recycling and reuse campaigns have done little to stem the tide of plastic pollution over the past 30 years. He believes society needs to contain its rising demand for plastic as companies and governments pursue ever-increasing growth. Oceans are simply "collateral damage" in the consumer economy, he said.

That's not stopping people like Byrne from trying to spread the word.

The accountant has 60 sets of rubber boots to loan to anyone who joins him on the banks of the Thames. He gives everyone a safety briefing, and there's a promise of an afternoon at the pub after the cold and often grueling work of trash counting and pickup.

"We have a problem with plastic," he said. "Everyone knows that, but let me say it again — we have a problem with plastic. We have to do something."

Watchdog: World slow to stem corruption

BY DAVID RISING
Associated Press

BERLIN — Corruption continues to be a global problem and the majority of countries are moving too slowly in their efforts to combat it, a watchdog group said Wednesday.

Transparency International said its 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index "reveals some disturbing information."

"Despite attempts to combat corruption around the world, the majority of countries are moving too slowly in their efforts," the Berlin-based organization said. "While stemming the tide against corruption takes time, in the last six years many countries have still made little to no progress."

Transparency ranks 180 countries and territories by perceived levels of public sector corruption where zero is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. It relies upon 13 expert data sources, including assessments from the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the World Economic Forum, to determine levels of bribery, diversion of public funds, use of public office for private gain and other issues of corruption.

The best performing region was Western Europe, with an average score of 66, while the worst performing region was sub-Saharan Africa, with an average of 52, followed closely by Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with an average of 34. The global average was 43.

New Zealand and Denmark topped the list at 89 and 88, respectively, with Somalia at the bottom with a nine, then South Sudan with 12, Syria with 14 and Afghanistan with 15.

Britain was cited as one of the most improved over the past six years, raising its score by eight points since 2012 to 82, placing it in this year's rankings one point above Germany and tied with the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Canada. The United States was tied in 16th place, along with Austria and Belgium, with a score of 75.

Looking at data from the World Justice Project, Transparency said it found that most countries that score low for civil liberties also tend to score high for corruption.

"Smear" campaigns, harassment, lawsuits and bureaucratic red tape are all tools used by certain governments in an effort to quiet those who drive anti-corruption efforts," said Patricia Moreira, Transparency's managing director.

WORLD



RISTO BOZOVIC/AP

A policeman guards the U.S. Embassy in Podgorica, Montenegro's capital, on Thursday after an assailant attacked the facility.

Montenegro works to ID embassy attacker

BY PREDRAG MILIC
Associated Press

PODGORICA, Montenegro — Police in Montenegro said Thursday they are "working intensely" to identify an assailant who threw an explosive device into the U.S. Embassy compound in the capital, Podgorica, before killing himself.

Police said in a statement that the man threw a bomb into the embassy yard and then committed suicide by activating another one about midnight Wednesday.

The blast created a crater but caused no other material damage to the embassy property, the statement said.

Police sealed off the area around the embassy after the explosion. Officers came to the scene after

receiving reports about an explosion and found a lifeless male body in the area of the Moraca river that runs through Podgorica, the statement said.

The U.S. State Department has said embassy officials are working with police to identify the assailant. The embassy in Podgorica said Thursday all staff are safe and accounted for after the incident.

Montenegro borders the Adriatic Sea in southeastern Europe. It joined NATO last year despite strong opposition from its traditional Slavic ally, Russia.

Several people, including two Russian secret service operatives, are on trial in Podgorica on charges that they wanted to overthrow Montenegro's government in 2016 because of its pro-Western policies.

It knowingly sells products that can cause deadly disease.

But they vowed to continue their case, saying they will now petition a judge to order prosecutors to investigate.

"We won't give up the fight," said Anna Marie van Veen, a lung cancer patient who is one of the complainants.

Amsterdam lawyer Benedicta Ficq filed what she called a world's first criminal complaint in 2016 seeking a prosecution on behalf of van Veen, another ex-smoker and a youth smoking prevention organization. Hospitals, doctors and other groups later

Duterte: Ban on workers to Kuwait remains, could expand

BY JIM GOMEZ
Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine president said Thursday that a ban on the deployment of workers to Kuwait, where a Filipino was found dead in a freezer, will continue and could be expanded to other countries where Filipino workers suffer "human degradation."

President Rodrigo Duterte made the remarks after attending the wake of Joanna Demafelis in the central Philippine town of Sara. He said he intends to file criminal charges against her employers, who are being hunted by Kuwaiti authorities.

Demafelis' body was found stuffed into a food freezer on Feb. 6 in a Kuwait City apartment where it reportedly had been kept for more than a year. Duterte has said her body bore torture marks and there were indications she was strangled.

"The ban stays, no deployment of Filipinos whatsoever in Kuwait," Duterte said outside the wake, where shirts worn by mourners bore messages demanding justice for the maid's death. The ban applies only to new Kuwait-bound workers and the thousands already there, mostly maids, can continue working.

Duterte said the government is conducting an assessment to "find out the places where we deploy Filipinos and our countrymen suffer brutal treatment and human degradation."

Demafelis' death is the latest overseas tragedy to befall work-

ers from the Philippines, a major labor exporter, with about a tenth of its more than 100 million people working abroad. The workers have been called the country's heroes because the income they send home has propped up the Southeast Asian nation's economy for decades, accounting for about 10 percent of its annual gross domestic product.

Duterte talked with the family of Demafelis and then briefly viewed her remains, gently touching her coffin with his hand.

Philippine officials are under increasing pressure to do more to monitor the safety of the country's worldwide diaspora of mostly maids, construction workers and laborers.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III told a Senate hearing Wednesday that he has recalled three Filipino labor officers from Kuwait to face an investigation. They failed to act on a request by Demafelis' family for help after

she went missing in January last year, he said.

Administrator Hans Leo Cacdac, of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, reported that at least 196 Filipinos had died in Kuwait in the past two years, mostly for unspecified medical reasons, but also four who committed suicide. That prompted senators to ask why labor officials did not immediately order a ban on the deployment of workers to Kuwait with the spike in deaths.

A Philippine labor delegation left for Kuwait on Thursday to seek better protection for Filipino workers that could prompt the Duterte administration to lift its ban, officials said.

They will demand a stop to the practice of many Kuwaiti employers of holding on to the passports, travel papers and cellphones of Filipino maids, which has prevented them from reporting abuses and calling for help, the officials said.



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WORLD

Statue touches off a tempest in Verona

Movement on to end a tradition

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

VERONA, Italy — Among this city's attractions is a 14th-century building billed as the home of Shakespeare's Juliet, the star-crossed teenager who became Romeo's bride, then widow and suicide.

Although there are substantial doubts that it was in fact the home of Shakespeare's tragic heroine, it is a magnet for lovers, the lovelorn and tourists. Among them every year are U.S. troops and families assigned to U.S. Army Africa and the 173rd Airborne Brigade, both based in Vicenza, just a 45-minute drive away.

The Gothic-style house once owned by the Cappelletti family in the old town, just a few minutes' walk from the arena, was bought by the city in 1905. It now brings in about a million euros annually, or about \$1.2 million, city officials said.

But one of its traditions may be unsuited to changes in modern society's gender politics, as a prominent American surgeon recently learned.

A bronze statue of Juliet stands in the courtyard. Touching her right breast, according to lore of unknown origin, is said to bring luck.

During a trip to Verona, Boston doctor Jon Einarsson, president of a medical board of gynecological surgeons who practice minimally invasive surgery, was among the legion of statue touchers, who nowadays line up for their turn to grab and grin for the camera. He showed a slide of it at a medical conference late last year.

In response, more than 100 surgeons petitioned the medical group's governing board to say that female surgeons had been sexually harassed and assaulted, intimidated and objectified by male colleagues. Einarsson's display of the photo was unprofessional and disrespectful, they said, particularly by a gynecological surgeon, and was emblematic of the problem.

Surgeons of both sexes insisted that Einarsson, who initially defended his photo as something all Verona tourists do, apologize, according to a story in *The Boston Globe* last month.

They also demanded that the organization institute new policies and procedures to investigate and respond to sexual harassment, and to put more women into leadership.

"I am 48, and I remember when I was young people touching the breast," said Flavio Tosi, a two-term Verona mayor who said in an interview that until recently he never gave the statue emplaced in 1972 a second thought.

Tosi said that he found the response "a little strange" and "cute."



PHOTOS BY NANCY MONTGOMERY/Stars and Stripes

A crowd gathers in the courtyard of Juliet's house in Verona, Italy, where Shakespeare set "Romeo and Juliet."



Above: Michela Morallato, of Vicenza, teamed with former Verona Mayor Flavio Tosi with plans to discourage the traditional groping of the Juliet statue by adding a statue of Romeo. The project is stalled. Right: Some say the tradition of touching the statue of Juliet should be discontinued because it is disrespectful.

"Impossible for that to happen in Italy," he said.

Unlike the United States, the United Kingdom and France, Italy has not had a "#MeToo" movement, the shift in sexual politics begun last year after a veritable army of famous actresses accused film producer Harvey Weinstein of sexual predation.

But Michela Morallato, an Army wife who lives in Vicenza, said she was offended by the Juliet tradition during a visit to the house with her young daughter and some American friends. Her

daughter asked why people were touching the statue's breasts, Morallato said, and she didn't have a good answer.

"I see an innocent girl," she said, noting that Juliet is 13 years old in the play. "I want to say that this is wrong."

She noted that the statue was put up and the tradition begun around the same time as a feminist movement in Italy started pushing through laws to legalize abortion and divorce.

It suffered so much handling



that it cracked at the breast and had to be replaced, Tosi said. The new statue cost the city about \$27,000.

"You can't break a tradition in Italy," said Tosi, who's running for prime minister in the coming Italian elections as a center-right candidate.

Morallato suggested to Tosi that they could place a statue of Romeo in the courtyard. Tosi said he was on board.

"I think it's a modern idea to

put Romeo near her," he said. "You can't force people. But maybe fewer people will touch the breast."

But installing a Romeo statue would require approval by a variety of government offices. The project has stalled since Tosi left office, an example, he said, of one of Italy's longstanding problems.

"Too much bureaucracy," he said.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Handyman stole \$10K worth of jewelry

CT SOUTHBURY

Police allege a Connecticut handyman stole \$10,000 worth of jewelry from a home where he was doing work.

The New Britain Herald reported that Jeffrey Couture, 37, of Plymouth, turned himself in Tuesday and was charged with second-degree larceny.

Police allege Couture stole the jewelry from a Southington home while he was being paid to do handyman work there. Police alleged Couture sold the stolen items at area pawn shops.

Some of the stolen items have been recovered.

Bank staff fed up with hawk scaring pigeons

NY DEWITT — The feeding habits of a Cooper's hawk may fascinate birdwatchers, but employees of an upstate New York bank are fed up with the feathery remnants of slaughtered pigeons at their doorstep.

A hawk has been killing and devouring pigeons near the entrance to M&T Bank in suburban Syracuse for several weeks.

Property manager Joseph Mathlin said the bank tried putting up a fake owl to shoo the hawk away. Jake McGowan, of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, said the hawk probably won't care about the owl but its pigeon prey might be scared off.

Pastor accused in Sunday school robbery

OH TOLEDO — An Ohio judge set bond at \$75,000 for a man described by police as a gun-wielding pastor who helped rob a teacher during a Sunday school class at his church.

The Blade in Toledo reported a judge set matching bond amounts Tuesday for Anthony Morris, 49, and his wife, Zelida, 46.

They were jailed on aggravated robbery charges after the alleged confrontation at St. Paul's AME Zion Church. Their 19-year-old daughter was sought on the same charge.

Police said the teacher alleged that the teen grabbed her hair, the pastor threw her to the ground and held a gun on her and the pastor's wife punched her and took items from the woman's purse, including a cellphone and a stun gun.

Man destroys home in attempt to expel skunks

MI FERNDALE — Authorities said a suburban Detroit man destroyed a home by using a smoke bomb in an attempt to get skunks out of a crawlspace.

The Detroit Free Press reported firefighters responded Monday night in Ferndale and found flames in the crawlspace and on the first floor. The fire spread through the walls of the rental home to the attic.

Crews put out the fire, but it burned through the roof.

Fire Chief Kevin P. Sullivan said no skunk carcasses were found.

THE CENSUS

2

The number of great white sharks a two-man crew hooked within a span of five minutes off the coast of South Carolina.
The Island Packet reported Outcast Sport Fishing Charter Capt. Chip Michalove said he and a friend were a few miles off Hilton Head Island on Monday when a 10-foot shark caught the line, spitting the hook after a brief struggle. Michalove said a "massive" 16-foot, 3,000-pound female shark took the bite within five minutes. Michalove, who works with the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy in Massachusetts, placed an acoustic tag on the shark's fin so scientists can track her.



NICKI KOHL, (DUBUQUE, IOWA) TELEGRAPH HERALD/AP

Indoor two-man luge

Thomas Jefferson Middle School sixth-graders, from left, Maurice Robison, Wolfgang Stechman, Derick Lomax (rear) and Soya Wehrenberg participate in a two-person luge activity Tuesday in Dubuque, Iowa. Jefferson students are participating in versions of Olympic games during physical education and wellness classes.

Cemetery worker falls, gets trapped in grave

NJ EAST HANOVER TOWNSHIP — A New Jersey cemetery said a worker was temporarily trapped in a grave he was digging.

A Hanover Cemetery spokesperson said Peter Ferencze, 59, of Flemington was digging a grave Tuesday afternoon when an 800-pound vault cover fell on top of him, pinning him in the open grave. The Daily Record reported emergency responders rushed to exhume Ferencze by digging out the vault cover then manually lifting the cover out of the grave.

The cemetery said Ferencze was released from the hospital after being treated for chest injuries.

Roswell woman turns in \$300 left at ATM

NM ROSWELL — A New Mexico man was reunited with cash he left at an ATM after a woman found it and

turned it in to police.

Roswell police said the man called authorities Monday to report he had left \$300 on top of the machine. His call came in just as the woman had dropped by the station to turn in the money.

She told officers there was no receipt or other information with the money to identify the owner but that she had noticed a man making a transaction while she waited her turn.

Target practice leaves bullet holes in walls

FL CAPE CORAL — Authorities said a Florida man who was taking target practice in his home was arrested after bullets went through the wall into his neighbors' apartment.

A Cape Coral police news release said Ivan Bakh, 61, was arrested Sunday and charged with firing a weapon in public and shooting into a dwelling.

Police said Bakh's neighbors called them Sunday morning after awaking to a loud bang and

finding holes in their bedroom and living room walls.

When officers went to Bakh's apartment, they reported seeing holes in the wall he shared with his neighbors. Police said they also found a loaded 9mm handgun.

Man: Devil, drugs led him to commit crime

MS COLUMBUS — A Mississippi man was given two life sentences for sexually abusing two people and kidnapping one of them.

The Commercial Dispatch reported Autrius Gaston, 36, blamed drugs and the devil for the 2015 incident in which he stole a car, robbed a store at gunpoint and sexually assaulted two people. He then forced one of the victims into his car and continued to assault her as he drove.

Judge Jim Kitchens, who said Gaston showed no remorse, also sentenced him to five years for grand larceny, 30 years for kidnapping, 30 years for each count of sexual battery and 10 years for

possession of a weapon by a convicted felon.

Man on 'Trump Dating' site has sex conviction

NC GREENSBORO — A North Carolina man with a felony conviction for indecent liberties with a child was one-half of the poster couple for a new "Trump Dating" website.

News outlets reported Monday that visitors to the dating site geared toward supporters of the president were greeted with the faces of Jodi and William Barrett Riddleberger, conservative activists involved in the tea party-inspired political action committee. Conservatives for Guilford County.

State records show Riddleberger was convicted in 1995 on the charge stemming from filming sex with a 15-year-old girl. He was 25 at the time.

As of Tuesday morning the site, trump.dating, featured a different couple.

From wire reports



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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Ford ousts executive over inappropriate behavior

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
Associated Press

DETROIT — Ford Motor Co. has ousted one of its top executives over allegations of inappropriate behavior.

North America President Raj Nair is leaving the company effective immediately, Ford said in a statement. His replacement has not yet been named.

Ford officials would not specify what behavior led to Nair's departure. Ford investigated after a recent anonymous complaint about Nair was made to the company's 24-hour hotline.

"We made this decision after a thorough review and careful consideration," Ford President and CEO Jim Hackett said in the statement. "Ford is deeply committed to providing and nurturing

a safe and respectful culture and we expect our leaders to fully uphold these values."

Nair expressed regret in a statement distributed by Ford.

"There have been instances where I have not exhibited leadership behaviors consistent with the principles that the company and I have always espoused," Nair said.

Nair said he had nothing to add to that statement when reached by phone Wednesday by The Associated Press.

Nair joins numerous business leaders who have been fired or have resigned in recent months because of inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

Casino magnate Steve Wynn resigned from his company earlier this month because of sexual misconduct claims. Omeed Malik,

a managing director at Bank of America, resigned in January over a sexual misconduct claim.

Hackett, who joined Ford last May, warned employees at the end of last year that Ford had no tolerance for misconduct. After The New York Times documented instances of sexual harassment at two plants in Chicago.

"We don't want you here, and we will move you off for engaging in any behavior like this," Hackett said in a letter to employees. "Our promise is there will be no retaliation against anyone who speaks up, and no one is above the rules, no matter where they are in the hierarchy. This is absolute."

Hackett also said Ford had hired more people to investigate charges of harassment or discrimination.

Michelle Krebs, an executive

analyst with the car shopping site Autotrader, said companies in every industry are looking at employee behavior in a new light, and the auto industry is no exception.

But the timing is particularly bad for Ford, which has struggled to lay out a clear direction for its future. Nair was a rising star at the company, she said.

Joseph Holt, ethics professor at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, praised Ford, saying companies have to take action when their codes of conduct are violated.

"When inappropriate behavior is tolerated or exceptions are made for star employees, then leadership is not clear, credible or consistent in its upholding of professed values, and that invites well-founded employee cynicism," he said.

Nair was named Ford's executive vice president and head of North America on June 1, 2017. Prior to that, he was Ford's head of global product development and chief technical officer.

Nair joined Ford in 1987 as a mechanical engineer. He held numerous leadership positions in Europe, Asia and South America.

Prior to being named head of global product development, Nair oversaw engineering for all Ford and Lincoln vehicles.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Military rates
Euro costs (Feb. 23)	\$1.2623
British buys (Feb. 23)	0.7972
British sells (Feb. 23)	0.7914
Japanese yen (Feb. 23)	105.00
South Korean won (Feb. 23)	1,055.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3934/0.7177
Canada (Dollar)	1.2750
China (Yuan)	0.1550
Denmark (Krone)	6.0401
Egypt (Pound)	17.6913
France (Euro)	\$1.2329/0.8111
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8253
Hungary (Forint)	253.81
Iceland (Króna)	3.4951
Japan (Yen)	106.84
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2999
Norway (Krone)	7.8507
Poland (Złoty)	3.39
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7499
South Africa (Rand)	11.91
South Korea (Won)	1,080.32
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9341
Thailand (Baht)	31.49
United Arab Emirates (Dirham)	3.7897

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers of military banking units. Commercial rates are for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For the latest rates, go to www.state.gov (for purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking unit or www.oanda.com for bank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies versus the U.S. dollar, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.50
Discount rate	2.00
Federal funds market rate	1.42
3-month bill	1.65
30-year bond	3.23

Angry Air France staff demonstrate during pay strike

Associated Press

PARIS — Hundreds of angry Air France staff members are demonstrating at the French airline's headquarters in northern Paris amid a strike over pay that has grounded flights.

Air France said that half of its long-haul flights departing from Paris will not operate Thursday and encouraged customers with Thursday flight reservations to change their tickets "at no extra cost."

The daylong strike aims to pressure management to increase employee salaries by 6

percent.

Air France said it will operate 75 percent of its total flights with 28 percent of employees participating in the action.

The airline said it would assure 75 percent of medium-haul flights and 85 percent of short-haul flights during the day.

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$2.846	\$3.132	\$3.371	\$3.316
Change in price	-5.0 cents	-4.5 cents	-4.3 cents	-3.6 cents
Netherlands	\$3.541	\$3.698	\$3.698	\$3.620
Change in price	-3.0 cents	-3.0 cents	-3.0 cents	+1.6 cents
U.K.	\$3.077	\$3.316	\$3.261	
Change in price	-4.5 cents	-4.3 cents	-4.3 cents	-3.6 cents
Azores		\$3.314	..	
Change in price	..	-4.3 cents	..	
Belgium	\$2.784	\$3.028	\$2.984	
Change in price	No change	No change	No change	No change
Turkey		\$3.192	..	
Change in price	..	-4.3 cents	-3.6 cents	
Italy	\$3.974	\$4.012		
Change in price	No change	..	No change	No change

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	\$3.119	\$3.059
Change in price	..	-4.0 cents	..	-4.0 cents
Guam	\$2.669	\$3.059
Change in price	-5.0 cents	..	-4.0 cents	..
South Korea	\$2.629	\$2.909	\$3.149	\$3.099
Change in price	-5.0 cents	-5.0 cents	-4.0 cents	-3.0 cents
Guam	\$2.619**	\$2.909	\$3.149	..
Change in price	-5.0 cents	-4.0 cents	-4.0 cents	..

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MARKET WATCH

	Feb. 21, 2018
Dow Jones Industrials	-166.97
Nasdaq composite	24,797.78
Standard & Poor's 500	-14.93
Russell 2000	1.85
	1,531.84

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

WEEKEND



Ambitious missions

In 'Annihilation,' five female characters venture into foreboding, top-secret territory looking for answers. Off screen, three of the film's stars formed a strong bond that led them on a real-life quest to fight harassment.

Profile on Page 24

Review on Page 25

WEEKEND: GADGETS & CHARTS



TIM TAI, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/TNS

Giuseppe Loianno, Aaron Weinstein and Adam Cho pose near a quadrotor drone Jan. 25 at the University of Pennsylvania's Pennovation Center in Forgotten Bottom, Pa.

Self-navigating drone swarm has life-saving applications

By TOM AVRIL
The Philadelphia Inquirer

The flying robots called drones were used in a dramatic light show for the Olympics opening ceremonies in South Korea, executing elaborate routines that humans had programmed in advance. Other drones are piloted by remote control, ranging from low-cost toy versions to the sophisticated devices used in the military.

In a University of Pennsylvania lab, engineers now have produced something else entirely: "swarms" of drones that can navigate on their own.

Picture a crew of firefighters outside a burning building, unable to tell whether any floors have collapsed. Or imagine a nuclear accident that is too dangerous for humans to examine up close. In the not-too-distant future, a group of these drones could handle the job, the Penn engineers say.

Such devices can work as a group to canvass a wide area, capturing images and other data that would help emergency responders plot the next step — from a safe distance — said team leader Vijay Kumar, who is also dean of Penn's engineering school.

"The robots basically talk to each other," he said. "They each know where they're going. They can use high-level algorithms to

distribute themselves in complex ways to solve tasks."

The devices perceive their surroundings by means of onboard cameras and "inertial measurement units" — the same technology used in smartphones to tell when the screen is tilted this way or that. The computer brain mounted on each drone also came from a smartphone — made by Qualcomm, which funded the research along with the Pentagon and the National Science Foundation.

"It's a smartphone without the case," said Penn research scientist Giuseppe Loianno.

Loianno and colleague Aaron Weinstein showed off four of the flying robots recently at the university's Pennovation Center.

Using a laptop computer, Weinstein issued a series of general commands to the drones — form a straight line, a diamond, a diagonal — then let the electronic hive mind figure out the rest.

The drones were made by San Diego-based Qualcomm and customized by the Penn team. A big selling point of the devices is their pinpoint precision.

The Intel drones used for the Olympics ceremony relied on GPS signals to fix their position — a technology that is good to within a few yards in any direction. But the Penn drones can tell where they are within an inch or so, the engineers said.

ON THE COVER: Natalie Portman explores a mystery in "Annihilation."

Paramount Pictures

ITUNES MUSIC

The top 10 songs on iTunes for the week ending Feb. 15:

1. "God's Plan," Drake
2. "Meant to Be" (feat. Florida Georgia Line), Bebe Rexha
3. "Perf," Ed Sheeran
4. "The Middle," Zedd, Maren Morris & Grey
5. "Look Alive" (feat. Drake), BlocBoy JB
6. "Finesse" (Remix, feat. Cardi B), Bruno Mars
7. "Pray for Me" (with Kendrick Lamar), The Weeknd
8. "Havana" (feat. Young Thug), Camila Cabello
9. "You Make It Easy," Jason Aldean
10. "Say Something" (feat. Chris Stapleton), Justin Timberlake

— Compiled by AP

SPOTIFY MUSIC

The top 10 songs on Spotify for the week ending Feb. 20:

1. "God's Plan," Drake
2. "All the Stars" (with SZA), Kendrick Lamar
3. "Havana," Camila Cabello
4. "Pray for Me" (with Kendrick Lamar), The Weeknd
5. "IDGAF," Dua Lipa
6. "rockstar" (feat. 21 Savage), Post Malone
7. "Look Alive" (feat. Drake), BlocBoy JB
8. "Havana" (feat. Young Thug), Camila Cabello
9. "The Middle," Zedd
10. "FRIENDS," Marshmello

— Compiled by Stars and Stripes

GADGET WATCH

D.A.D. gets a handle on personal security

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

You can't plan when you or someone you're with might be attacked, which is why you might want the D.A.D. defense alert device from Tigerlight within reach.

The device easily fits in a purse, computer bag or the palm of your hand while taking a night-time run or in any other situation you feel it's needed.

With the press of a button, you instantly release Live Sabre Red Pepper Spray (which I did not test) and send an alert with your GPS location to family, friends or other contacts via the D.A.D. app (Android or iOS). The alert reads "I'm in danger."

The button works in two stages: press it and the alert goes out; you press it all with way with a little more pressure to release the spray.

An LED 150-lumen multi-mode flashlight is built into the device. Light modes include a constant light or panic, high, SOS or low settings.

The unit measures 5.5-by-1.75 inches and weighs 4.4 ounces. It's water-resistant with a polycarbonate body and includes a AA battery for the general operation and a long-life lithium battery for the built-in Bluetooth.

Some additional information supplied on the Tigerlight website says the spray is "10 percent OC, 2mm SHU, 1.33 percent Major Capsaicinoids, 4.5 grams, stops 96 percent of attackers when used in prior TigerLights as shown in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department study using spray that was only 0.69 percent major capsaicinoid percentage compared to 1.33 percent."

They also state that "the spray in the D.A.D. is six times more potent than the 0.2 percent major capsaicinoid spray used by Marines."

A clearly labeled test canister is included and should be used in a safe area.

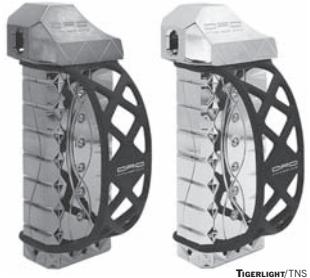
One test canister and one spare canister are included with each D.A.D., and additional canisters can be purchased; \$9.99 for the spray and \$4.99 for testers.

Online: tigerlight.net; \$129.99 each, in variety of colors. Bulk pricing available.

The Ventyte powercell 6010 plus is so simple that it doesn't even have to have instructions, but might be the most useful powered gadget you own.

The device's portable battery doesn't need a cable to charge itself, nor do you have to have an iOS Lighting cable with you to charge an iPhone or iPad with the battery.

That's because both are built in. Folding AC prongs tuck away when they aren't needed.



TIGERLIGHT/TNS

The D.A.D. defense alert device fits in the palm of your hand to add a layer of security when you're out somewhere that feels less than safe.

ed out to plug directly into a standard AC power outlet. Or you can connect a micro USB cable for charging.

A lighting cable is attached to the battery on a 3-inch durable cable, which tucks inside the battery when it's not in use. If you need to charge a D.A.D. device, you're still in luck. Just plug your own USB charging cable into the universal USB output port. Both the cable and port can be used simultaneously with a 12w output.

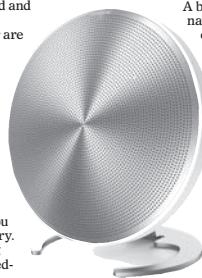
A powercell 6010 plus is also available with a type-C cable option.
Online: tessco.com; \$49.95

The iClever BoostSound (BTS-09) Bluetooth speakers are built with a stylish aluminum alloy finish and sit upright to pinpoint the direction the sound will go.

It's a rounded speaker, with dimensions of 5.12-by-7.87-by-8.66 inches, but if you were to replace the front metallic speaker grill with a mirror, it will look like a vanity mirror on a stand.

Inside the rich bass-filled speaker is a pair of 10 W dual drivers and a 4000 mph rechargeable battery, good for up to 12 hours of playtime. You can connect non-Bluetooth devices via the aux port and use it for handsfree calls.

A background LED illumination light is built in for cool light, and everything is controlled by a row of buttons on the top.
Online: iClever.com; \$49.99



The stylish iClever BoostSound (BTS-09) Bluetooth speakers send the sound where you want it to go.

iClever/TNS

ITUNES MOVIES

The top 10 movies on iTunes for the week ending Feb. 18:

1. "Justice League"
2. "Coco"
3. "Wonder"
4. "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri,"
5. "IDGAF," Dua Lipa
6. "Rockstar" (feat. 21 Savage), Post Malone
7. "Look Alive" (feat. Drake), BlocBoy JB
8. "Roman J. Israel, Esq."
9. "Dunkirk"
10. "Only the Brave"



— Compiled by AP

BOOKS

The top 10 books on the iBook charts for the week ending Feb. 18:

1. "The Wife Between Us," Greer Hendricks & Sarah Pekkanen
2. "The Great Alone," Kristin Hannah
3. "Unraveled," Helen Hardt
4. "The Woman in the Window," A.J. Finn
5. "Look for Me," Lisa Gardner
6. "Night Moves," Jonathan Kellerman
7. "Darker," El James
8. "Still Me," Jojo Moyes
9. "Embrace," Stacey Lynn
10. "Melt," Helen Hardt

— Compiled by AP

APPS

The top paid iPhone apps for the week ending Feb. 18:

1. Minecraft
2. Heads Up!
3. Pocket Gamer
4. iPic
5. NBA 2K18
6. Bloons TD 5
7. Geometry Dash
8. Florence
9. iSchedule

— Compiled by AP

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1

Documentary showcases historically black schools

Filmmaker Stanley Nelson knew he wanted to tell a story about the nation's historically black colleges and universities — what they have meant to black people.

And in making the documentary "Tell Them We Are Rising: The Story of Black Colleges and Universities," Nelson said, something quickly became clear: HBCUs never were just about learning what was in books. From their beginnings in the years after the Civil War, the nation's HBCUs have been driving forces for African-American economic and political advancement.

Nelson wrote, directed and produced the film, which made its debut at the Sun-

dance Film Festival last year and is getting its national broadcast debut this month.

According to the federal government, an HBCU is an accredited learning institution started before 1964 that had a primary mission of educating black people, and there are about 100 of them today.

Nelson's film explores those HBCU origins and how their campuses became safe spaces for African-American intellectualism to flourish and places where larger societal issues also were felt.

— Associated Press

- 'Tell Them We Are Rising' airs Sunday on AFN-Spectrum.

2

Lamar, others channel spirit of 'Black Panther'

No one needs to be prompted to go see the record-breaking, well-reviewed "Black Panther," now in theaters. But did you know there's a "Black Panther" album? The songs by various artists, and curated by Kendrick Lamar, are only loosely related to the film. But the spirit of power and connection is there. The artists, styles and sounds blend to make a collection worthy of attention on its own merits.



- Music reviews on Page 37.



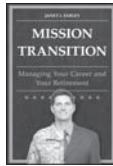
Howard University students cheer in 2016 as President Barack Obama delivers the commencement speech in Washington. There are about 100 historically black colleges and universities today.

3

Book a lifeline during civilian transition

Military folks entering civilian life encounter more than a career change; it's a cultural shift requiring a myriad of adjustments. "Mission Transition: Managing Your Career and Your Retirement" can make the process less daunting. Author Janet J. Farley uses experience and research to create a helpful, comprehensive guide.

- Book reviews on Page 38.



4

'Kingdom Come' rewards an honest day's work

Players of the open-world RPG "Kingdom Come: Deliverance" will learn the hard way that nothing comes easily for serfs in the Middle Ages. The epic 15th-century adventure begins as the protagonist's town is burned to the ground, leaving him as the lone survivor. Only honest labor — chores, learning to read, finding swords that aren't rusted through — will give this serf a leg up.



- 'Kingdom Come' review on Page 26.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Sci-fi SISTERHOOD

Stars of female-led thriller 'Annihilation' discuss bonding on set, combating sexual harassment across industries

BY JEN YAMATO
Los Angeles Times

Onscreen in the sci-fi odyssey "Annihilation," an expedition ventures deep into a foreboding terrain known as Area X, carrying guns and harboring mounting suspicions about one another. These soldiers — a psychologist (Jennifer Jason Leigh), a biologist (Natalie Portman), a paramedic (Gina Rodriguez), a physicist (Tessa Thompson) and an anthropologist (Tuva Novotny) — enter what is about to become a living, breathing nightmare, an environmental disaster zone without scientific explanation, as filtered through the mind of "Ex Machina" director Alex Garland, adapting the first book in Jeff VanderMeer's "Southern Reach" trilogy.

The fact that they're all complex and dimensional female characters is at once trailblazing and, refreshingly, perfectly normalized.

"Each of the women have their own destructive behavior," said Portman, who brings steady intensity to the role of Lena, the biologist with her own reasons for volunteering for the dangerous mission. "I find that so beautiful. That's the greatest science fiction, when the psychological becomes externalized."

"And to have five women at the center of this expedition — we're so used to seeing five men going and doing something together, it's not even questioned why it's always all men. To give that same kind of attitude to five women is really unique."

Jennifer Jason Leigh, from left, Natalie Portman, Tuva Novotny, Tessa Thompson and Gina Rodriguez star in "Annihilation."

Paramount Pictures



The sisterhood struck on the London set of "Annihilation" is still strong between Portman, Rodriguez and Thompson, reunited in a suite at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel ahead of the film's Los Angeles world premiere. Sitting side by side on a couch with their legs curled up, the camaraderie came flooding back in waves of laughter and mutual admiration.

"I feel like ['Annihilation'] is the kind of movie where if you've seen it only once, you haven't seen it," said Thompson. "One of Alex's references for this film was [Andrei Tarkovsky's] 'Stalker,' which I watched a couple times in anticipation of making this movie, trying to figure out what that film is, and means. It felt like being inside of a meditation. ... It's a very meditative, lyrical film, and we don't have a lot of practice as audience members with that kind of content, particularly in American film."

"I feel like we reject it quickly too, the way they did with Darren Aronofsky's 'mother,' which I loved," added Rodriguez, gesticulating to the sky. "I think it was Jennifer [Lawrence]'s best performance. It made me think for hours. Art that moves you in any way which, whether it's positively or negatively — it's working."

Part philosophical sci-fi, part psychedelic-existential fever dream, "Annihilation" pulses with the looming unease of the unknown. That unknown lurks in the darkness of the vast swamplands and marshes of the Southern Reach, marked by the beauty and horrors of nature run amok, and perhaps more disturbingly in the disquiet of confronting those self-mysteries within oneself.

Self-destruction is in our DNA, the film posits. Its approach, however, is one of empathy. And the journeys the three stars went on in search of their characters, expanded in collaboration with Garland from the sparsely detailed counterparts in VanderMeer's book, had profound and lasting effects.

"To have five women at the center of this expedition — we're so used to seeing five men going and doing something together, it's not even questioned why it's always all men. To give that same kind of attitude to five women is really unique."

Natalie Portman

tion to her character Josie's growing link with the mutations the group encounters as they get closer to the inexplicable veil of energy known as The Shimmer. "There was something in it that I was really struck by in the destruction of the Earth, of how we treat the other things that are not human — the planet," she said. "At a certain point with the destruction that we do, we will not have the technology to undo it or to even understand it."

The project, she added, also forced her to consider her own mortality. "I don't spend a lot of time contending with the fact that time is not endless," she said. "I really live in that fallacy, personally. I'm getting older, my parents are getting older ... I always looked forward to spending some time thinking about that."

Rodriguez's character Anya, a paramedic with a physical swagger, has an outgoing personality that masks her own addictive personality and deep-seated fears — a theme that resonates in Rodriguez's own life.

"I didn't realize how much of my personal draw to the character was her reason for going into The Shimmer," she admitted. "Her reason for going on a suicide mission was running away from her past and her addictive personality, her addictions, and her fear of mental illness, and her fear of losing control of herself."

"I'm always battling the idea of mental health," Rodriguez continued. "My fear of it personally, the history of mental health in my family, and not ever really facing it because in my culture we don't really talk about mental health. I got to actually enter my own fear as an actor."

It was almost two years ago that the cast of "Annihilation" assembled in London to shoot the ambitious and heady film. Their lushly immersive sets commanded one corner of the historic Pinewood Studios as another sci-fi flick, "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," shot on neighboring stages.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

WEEKEND: MOVIES

FROM PAGE 24

The material was physically and mentally demanding, and Garland's decision to film chronologically meant that the longer production went on, the more exhausting it became.

When it came time to shoot one of the film's most harrowing scenes, the feeling on set was palpable. With three of the cast tied to chairs inside a dimly lit abandoned house and Garland himself operating a massive animatronic bear head menacing his stars, the scene felt real.

"In that moment it was about truly facing our mortality, and because we shot the film in sequence, by then we were tired and had lived in this for a little bit," said Thompson. "By then we really had this bond."

They formed that bond under tents in the rain between takes, by going out to sushi dinners and becoming friends. Thompson and Portman tease Rodriguez, then newly out of what she describes as a "mail-in-the-coffin" relationship, about how she went full-on "Eat, Pray, Love" on their weekends off.

"I was jealous because you had fun adventures," Thompson said, turning to her. "I'd be like, 'Where are you?' because we were neighbors and we lived one flight away from each other, when I was bored or wanted a sandwich, and she'd be like, 'I'm on a yacht!' She was 'Eat, Pray, Love' every weekend and I was training for 'Thor: Ragnarok' doing sword work."

A group night out at a Radiohead concert arranged by Portman was, Rodriguez said, "the gift of the century."

"Whatever," Portman demurred. "It was because I was with you guys! We were like, 'This is normal!' I'm not a suburban mom of two! I'm, like, a cool person!"

The trio found themselves linking up again after "Annihilation" with a very different goal: Combating sexual harassment across industries, including their own, as founding signatories of the Time's Up movement this year.

"I feel like it's a continuation of the sisterhood we started on this movie," Portman said of her friendship with Thompson and Rodriguez. "It was really awesome to get to experience each other in a new light; as colleagues, and then friends, and then fellow activists."

Thompson has been held in see Time's Up take hold in the culture, and by the importance her peers have placed on international activism.

"Any measure of success that Time's Up specifically has had has to be connected to what's outside of our industry," she said. "It began with a call to arms from the Farm Workers' Alliance, from the women who literally put food on our table, to say, 'We stand with you because we understand what we're going through, and it happens in our industry.' So it's bigger than us."

"Having worked in the industry for as long as I have and particularly as a young woman of color, it's hard to gain access — even when you gain a measure of a platform to really get your voice heard," Thompson said.

"It's important to have sisters to make sure your voice is as vital."

'Annihilation' singularly adventurous

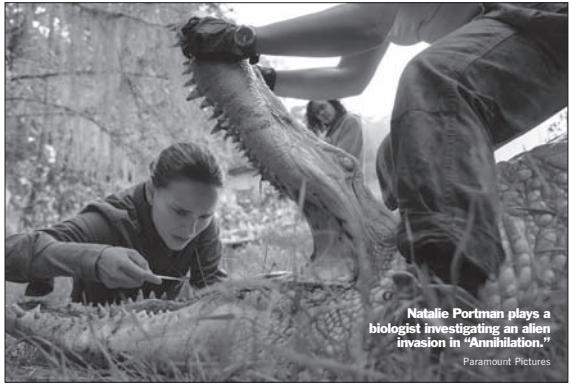
BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Sometimes, cinematic adaptations are conversations with source material rather than direct representations. No recent film more exemplifies this idea than Alex Garland's bold, metaphysical and just plain weird "Annihilation," adapted from Jeff VanderMeer's book. The result is a deeply challenging, big-budget, female-driven sci-fi film, which begs a question: how did this get made? First, it's singularly adventurous as this don't come around often.

VanderMeer's book is obtuse, meditative, mysterious and transfixing. It suggests and hints at possibilities that are far greater and wilder than the characters encounter in the plot, requiring the reader to make those connections, to fill in the gaps. Garland, who adapted the screenplay, takes the premise, characters and larger ideas of VanderMeer's book, and interprets them in his own story to bring an almost unfilmable novel to the big screen as a sci-fi epic.

"Annihilation" follows a group of female scientists who set out on what is essentially a suicide mission to a top-secret location known as Area X, where a shimmering energetic border has appeared, cordoning off an amorphous portion of wilderness, changing its landscape. There is no communication in or out, and in three years, no missions have returned. Having tried groups of military men, they're trying out women scientists.

Natalie Portman stars as Lena, a biologist, professor and former soldier. Her husband, Kane (Oscar Isaac), went missing in Area X for a year before he returned, changed, subdued, and violently ill. She joins the latest mission hoping to search for whatever might have changed him, for the traces of him he left behind. She's part of a group including medic Anya (Gina Rodriguez), physicist Josie (Tessa Thompson), geothermal scientist Cass (Tuva Novotny) and a taciturn psychologist, Dr. Ventress (Jennifer Jason Leigh). They're going to



Natalie Portman plays a biologist investigating an alien invasion in "Annihilation."

Paramount Pictures

enter The Shimmer, go to the lighthouse, collect data and return (though that seems unlikely, based on the track record).

What happens in The Shimmer is where Garland diverges from VanderMeer's tale. Time and space tilts once they enter. It is stunningly beautiful, a vibrant, dripping rainforest swamp overflowing with bright flowers and fungi. Hazy light pierces, signaling always the presence of the lighthouse. But it seems to alter time, too. They lose whole days of memory, and the wildlife is increasingly intoxicating, dangerous and threatening. Great beasts leap out of the dark, their roars carrying a distinct human tone. The group finds remnants of old missions and harrowing video tapes. Always the question remains: Did something kill them, or did they go crazy and kill each other?

This is a basic question that returns again and again, and it lays the foundation for the

themes of existential paranoia that Garland dives into during the last act of "Annihilation." The title refers to total destruction, but what's happening isn't destruction but transformation, mutation. Does a sense of self survive a mutation? Does your soul?

Garland splays these big ideas brazenly, grounding them in Portman's performance as grieving widow, curious scientist and fierce warrior. She must confront the memory of her husband again and again as she traces his journey through steps that have fragmented, rooted and rot. She digs and delves inside to find an answer, and discovers the only way through is within. That larger message is what Garland eventually uncovers, giving a distinctly spiritual slant to this science-fiction story.

"Annihilation" is rated R for violence, bloody images, language and some sexuality. Running time: 120 minutes.

'Game Night' needed to take more Risk with comedy

BY RICK BENTLEY
Tribune News Service

There's no question the undisputed winner in the new comedy "Game Night" is the generally dependable Rachel McAdams. The infectious energetic and unfiltered exuberance she brings to the role of the super competitive Annie — one of a group of best friends who get together on a regular basis to play parlor and board games — turns what was little more than an extended episode of a television comedy series into more of a winning effort.

Annie and her husband, Max (Jason Bateman), have had a monopoly on the weekly game night battles that range from charades to Scrabble. The other regulars include Ryan (Billy Magnussen), the single member of the group who picks his game partners based on the ease he thinks he can bed them and not their knowledge of Stratego. That changes when he's joined by the very smart and savvy Sarah (Sharon Horgan). Rounding out the group are the fun-loving Kevin (Lamorne Morris) and Michelle (Kylie Bunbury).

The biggest challenge for Annie and Max is to keep the game night secret from their creepy cop neighbor, Gary (Jesse Plemons).

Creating the biggest disruption is Max's more successful, better-looking, richer, smarter and more popular brother, Brooks (Kyle Chandler). The pair have been competitive since they were young, with Brooks way ahead in the scoring. On a rare visit to town, Brooks takes advantage of the control



WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT/AF

Friends gets caught up in what they think is a murder-mystery game in "Game Night," with Rachel McAdams and Jason Bateman.

he has over his brother to get game night shifted to his house, where he changes all the rules. Brooks has put in play a kidnapping mystery where the first one to find him will win a fabulous prize.

There's just one catch. Before the fake kidnapping can get started, Brooks is grabbed by real thugs, and the only way to save him is for the players to break multiple laws and risk their lives. And they have to do it all by midnight.

The first part of "Game Night," directed by John Francis Daley and Jonathan M. Goldstein ("Vacation"), has some fun moments, especially because of McAdams. There's no doubt that Annie is the kind of person who doesn't take losing lightly, and

when she's forced into real-life criminal acts, she gets a rush from the excitement. That's a good balance for Bateman, as he always tends to play the guy who quietly calculates the odds before doing anything. She's a person of action, while he's more inclined toward reaction.

The four other players are not developed other than to be additional pawns in the game. Screenwriter Mark Perez ("Herbie Fully Loaded") throws in a few twists, but he could have used several more, especially for the supporting players. Their storylines stay far too linear to give the film the additional layers that make a mystery more interesting.

The biggest blunder by Perez is going with the same kind of thinking that has been used in countless TV shows and films where average people are suddenly forced to do extraordinary things. A complete rejection of even the most basic logic of thinking must be done, or the film falls apart in the first act. To work, this has to be a world where average people can go against trained crooks and sinister criminal bosses and beat them at every move.

This is light comedy, but it's possible for average people to do great things if it all happens by chance and not as if they were trained CIA operatives just waiting for a game night to go badly. A sitcom has a better chance of making that work because there is less time to fill.

"Game Night" is rated R for action scenes, sexual references and language. Running time: 100 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Courtesy of Warhorse Studios



A SERF'S LIFE

The brutality, excitement of open-world RPG 'Kingdom Come' takes some getting used to

By MICHAEL S. DARNELL
Stars and Stripes

The sun broke over the 15th-century Bohemian landscape and, I, the son of a humble blacksmith, began my day by eating a bit of dried meat, followed by a rare bath — taken in the same trough used to wash the laundry. I spent a portion of my day hunting rabbits, losing several precious arrows in the process, but finally snagging enough meat so that I wouldn't starve before tomorrow's end.

Alas, I was set upon by bandits and, having only a rusty ax to my name — and the freshly caught hare quickly losing its freshness — I had to flee. Luckily, I survived the encounter and will live to see another day.

Just another day in the life of Hal, the protagonist in "Kingdom Come: Deliverance" an open-world feudal life role-playing game by Warhorse Studios.

"Kingdom Come" is unlike any other RPG. While plenty of RPGs have paid lip service to realism, almost all of them eventually veered into magic, prophecies about the "Chosen One" or some other such nonsense. "Deliverance" offers no such tomfoolery and replaces it with chores, learning how to read and getting your ass kicked by any group of fighters better armed than yourself, no matter your level.

And it's awesome. Mostly.

The story begins not unlike every other roleplaying game on the market. As a unassuming resident of an even more unassuming village, Hal is destined for a lifetime of humdrum routine and boredom. After a raiding party

torches the town — not over some search for a magical MacGuffin, but because of good old-fashioned money — Hal is forced to flee. This sets into motion a series of events that will see this humble serf rise to the position of ... well, a slightly less humble serf.

In the Elder Scrolls series, you'll yawn at becoming the head of your 12th guild because you've put no real effort into getting there. "Skyrim" tells you where to go and exactly how to proceed, and it generates

loot and enemies commensurate with your level. In "Kingdom Come," you'll be ecstatic when you fend off a couple of bandits and find a sword that isn't rusted through.

To some, the decreased level of import put on the player character might be off-putting. To a lifelong fan of roleplaying games, I found it refreshing and immersive in a way that few other games have managed. It's a true entry into the genre — you're given a role and you're forced to play through as that role.

That role just happens to be a nobody in a world full of them. Small touches in the game's mechanics help sell the fact that Hal isn't the center of the universe.

When asked to go to talk to somebody at a specific time and place, should you



Overall grade:

B-

behave like a proper noble or just roll your eyes and do it when you feel like it? The answer is that it's up to you, and that's the real strength of the game.

It's a strength that's not without its flaws. The game's combat is a bit of a mess. It's not that it's bad — it's just that it's not great. The controls are a bit wonky, and the AI is not always the most intelligent. But it's not terrible.

That can't be said for two mechanics that ultimately bring down "Kingdom Come": the broken thieving mechanics and the unwieldy save system.

While using a controller, the lockpicking

mechanic simply does not work as intended. In theory, you're supposed to hold the right thumbstick in a "sweet spot" while rotating the left stick. That doesn't really work all the time with a controller. With a mouse-and-keyboard setup it's a bit easier, and easier still if you have a mouse with which you can adjust the DPI. But on a controller, forget it.

But honestly, the lockpicking mechanic can be ignored. What can't be ignored so easily is the save system.

Unlike every other open-world RPG made, you're unable to save at will. You can brew or purchase special potions that allow you to save when you'd like, but they're expensive and hard to come by. Without those, you're forced either to come down a properly owned or rented bed or to rely on an autosave system that spaces its saves too far apart to be of any use.

Glitches are to be expected. No developer on this planet has created a bug-free open-world game. But there is a reason those games have allowed users to save at will. Losing large amounts of time or having to relive cutscenes because of a poor gaming choice I made is unacceptable. Losing progress and having to replay 30 to 45 minutes because of a bug I had no control over is not.

In fact, these two mechanics are so poorly implemented that the first two major mods created by fans are attempts at fixing them. Warhorse also has tweeted that both mechanics are under review for potential patching in the future. If they're fixed, "Kingdom Come" might be about as close to perfect as a first-time open-world RPG can be.

The world is beautiful, the voice acting is top-notch — no "Elder Scrolls" dull line delivery here — and the strict adherence to building a believable landscape elevates "Kingdom Come" far above its current peers.

It's rough around the edges, and certainly playing as a fairly unimportant serf isn't for everybody. But gamers with a little patience and a lot of tolerance will find much in "Kingdom Come" that other games simply haven't been able to provide.

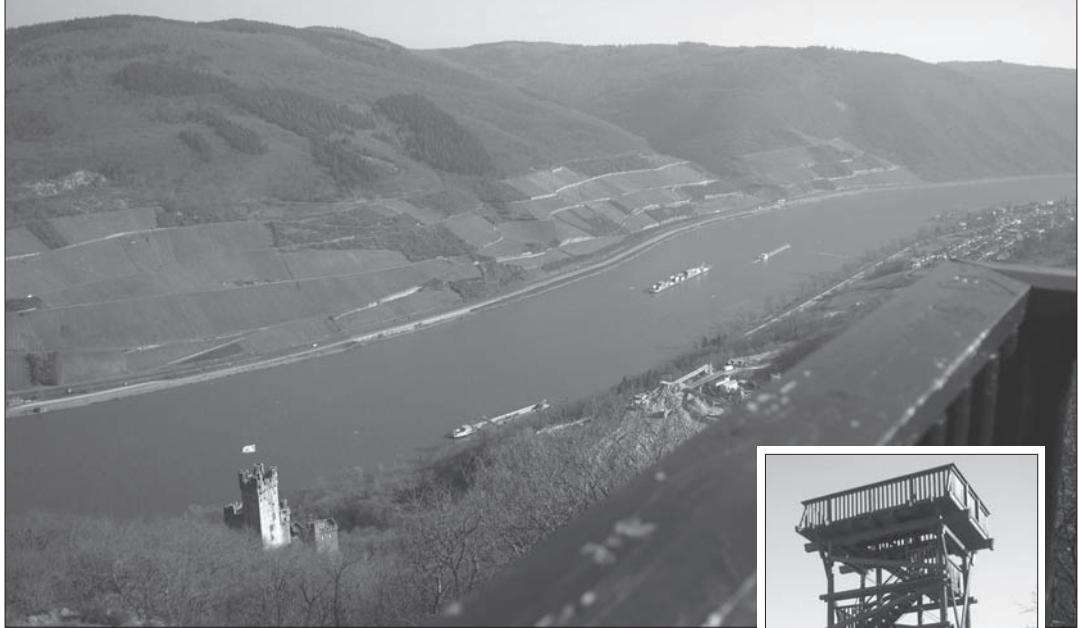
In a world with infinite me-too copycats and dull, fetch quest-laden roleplaying games, an entirely new take on the old formulas — even with its bugs and a couple of less-than-stellar mechanics — stands out.

Grade: B-
Platforms: PC (reviewed), PlayStation 4 and Xbox One

KingdomComeDeliverance.com
A copy of this game was provided for review purposes.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



DAN STOUTAMIRE/Stars and Stripes

A view of Sooneck Castle, bottom left, and the Rhine can be seen from the Sieben-Buergen-Blick, or Seven Castles' View, an observation platform above the town of Niederheimbach, Germany. The platform, right, is a 45-minute hike from the parking lot for Sooneck Castle.



Royal sight

Observation platform rewards hikers with castle-studded 360-degree view of Rhine valley

By DAN STOUTAMIRE
Stars and Stripes

Hardy explorers willing to brave Germany's low winter temperatures can beat the summer crowds and be rewarded with a 360-degree view of the picturesque Middle Rhine valley from the lookout above the wine-making town of Niederheimbach.

The Sieben-Buergen-Blick, or Seven Castles' View, is a four-story, wooden observation platform nestled in the hills above the riverbank near Burg Sooneck. It's located directly along the more than 100-mile-long Rhine castle hiking trail, which runs from Bingen, near

Mainz, north to Rolandseck in the Eifel region. Day-trippers might find it easier to simply park at the entrance to Burg Sooneck, which is also worth a visit.

The trek to the lookout was relatively grueling, with a steady incline all along the 45-minute route from the parking area, but for those able to make it up, the views from the top on a clear day make it all worthwhile. And, of course, the way down is much easier. The trail itself is well-marked and wide, looping up and around a wonderful sylvan landscape, which even in winter is visually arresting.

The lookout is about a 45-minute drive from Wiesbaden

and just over an hour from Kaiserslautern.

The trail was ice-free when I visited, but it's a good idea to wear sturdy boots and dress warmly in the event of snowfall or frosts.

I've long thought that the Middle Rhine, through which hundreds of day cruise ships pass during the warmer months, is among the most lovely areas in western Germany, and the view from the lookout confirms it. Here, the river winds peacefully through vineyards, forested hills and snug hamlets. Seeing it from high above is the perfect way to appreciate its beauty.

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ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

From Wiesbaden, take the B455 south to A66 west, followed by the A643 south to A60 west. Take exit 13 at Bingen to get on the B9, which you'll take all the way to Niederheimbach. Take a left at Soonecker Strasse.

From Kaiserslautern, take the A63 north to the A61 north in Alzey. Exit near Bingen for the B9, which takes you to Niederheimbach, before taking a left at Soonecker Strasse. Parking is available at Soonecker Strasse, 55413 Niederheimbach.

TIMES

Open 24 hours a day all year

COSTS

Parking and admission to the tower are free.

INFORMATION

Website: niederheimbach.de/touristik/touristik_blick.html

— Dan Stoutamire

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Scandinavia building toward a better future

Anyone traveling in Scandinavia this year will find a region that's investing productively in itself. Numerous urban, cultural and transit projects are underway, continuing the Scandinavian devotion to quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Here are some newsworthy notes to keep in mind as you travel in the region in 2018.

In Denmark's capital city, a massive subway project is creating havoc above ground, but when completed in 2019, a new circular line will make sightseeing in Copenhagen's city center a breeze. Several museums are being rebuilt or refurbished: The Museum of Copenhagen will reopen later this year in a new building, and the National Gallery of Denmark is renovating, but staying open through most of the work.

Major construction is also ongoing in some of Denmark's other large cities. In Aarhus, a new light rail line opened at the end of 2017. In Odense, the Hans Christian Andersen Museum is being rebuilt. While it won't reopen until 2020, in the meantime travelers can visit a temporary museum space, the home where Andersen was born, and his childhood home.

In Oslo, Norway, the urban streetscape continues to evolve, with a 5-mile harbor promenade now running nearly the entire length of the city's waterfront. The historic Grand Cafe at the Grand Hotel is open again after renovation, and still has beautiful old artwork — including a mural showing Norway's literary and artistic legends from a century ago. The National Gallery, home to magnificent works by celebrated Norwegian artists, should remain open through 2018, but is scheduled to close in fall 2019. (When it does, the collection will move to the new National Museum being built near the harbor, where it will be joined, in 2020, by a brand-new building for the Edward Munch Museum.)

Norway is also working on improvements to its transportation infrastructure. In Bergen, a train now travels from the city center to the newly remodeled Flesland Airport. Oslo's outlying Moss Rygge Airport is closed, discount airlines now primarily use the even farther afield Sandefjord Airport Torp, 70 miles south of the city. And construction on the speedy X2000 train line from Oslo to Stockholm will likely interrupt service through 2020 — plan on either flying, or taking take a slower Intercity train instead.

Sweden's museums continue to switch back and forth from charging admission to being free — it all depends upon which political party is in power. As recent elections brought in a left-leaning majority, admission charges have been dropped (for now) at many of Stockholm's sights, including the Royal Armory, Museum of Medieval Stockholm, Museum of Modern Art and Swedish History Museum.

Several of Stockholm's top attractions are either closed for renovation or in the process of moving, including the Royal Armory (main exhibit halls closed in 2018), Royal Coin Cabinet (moving, closed until 2020), Stockholm City Museum (closed until 2019), Saluhall market (closed for renovation) and the National Museum of Fine Arts (reopening in late 2018).

Stockholm's new Vikingaliv Museum (on the Djurgården waterfront) busts myths about the Vikings. Interactive displays present them as colonizers and traders more than looters and warriors — you



CAMERON HEWITT/Ricksteves.com

The redeveloped waterfront in Oslo, Norway, includes a 5-mile-long promenade and stunning architecture. The National Gallery will be open through 2018.

won't find a horned helmet in the place.

Southeast Sweden is Glass Country — the traditional home of the country's art-glass business. In the 1990s, many independent hotshops went out of business or were gobbled up by corporate conglomerates. But the region has regained its footing as a showcase for small glass producers, including several new boutique enterprises: the Orranrea Bruk glassworks in Orrefors (with an open-air hotshop) and the Glass Factory in Boda — part glass-art museum/showroom and part glassblowing hotshop. The town of Växjö, convenient to Glass Country, has also perked up, with good restaurants and a high-end hotel.

Like its Scandinavian neighbors, Finland's capital city of Helsinki is undergoing major redevelopment work. Construction on the Hertesaari peninsula

just outside the city center (where cruise ships dock) and the West Harbor terminals (with ferry service around the Baltic region) will add green spaces, a mix of residences and recreational marinas to what is now a barren industrial zone. Visitors to Hertesaari can get a taste of what's to come at the stylishly modern Loely sauna, with water views and an indoor/outdoor restaurant.

Iceland continues to grow in popularity as one of Europe's trendiest destinations. Expect crowds and book rooms well in advance — especially if visiting in summer.

The Nordic countries have a lot to offer, and those traveling with the latest information will have a truly rich experience.

Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Munich celebrates its strong beer season

Raise a toast to those clever Bavarian monks! Although required to fast during the Lenten season, no prohibition prevented them from drinking. The "liquid bread" they first brewed and consumed back in the seventeenth century is the granddad of those malty, punch-packing double bock beers known and loved today as "Starkbier." The identity of a strong beer is given away by its name, which usually ends in the -ator suffix.

The taste of Starkbier and spirit of the season can be appreciated by attending a festival centered around this potent treat in the weeks to come. The period in which this beer is consumed, referred to as the city's fifth season, means it's time for Munich's second-biggest beer festival after Oktoberfest. It offers a less-crowded and more traditional atmosphere than its raucous international cousin.

Paulaner, maker of the original strong beer known as Salvator, organizes the season's biggest strong beer bashes at its Nockherberg brewery. Celebrations surrounding the opening of the first barrel are attended by the



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

political elite, who are subjected to biting satirical ridicule. Festivities take place in a beer tent, an Oktoberfest-style band plays, and visitors, many turned out in traditional Bavarian dress, drink from Kefelerhofer ceramic steins.

Nockherberg's strong beer fests take place on March 4-7, 11-14, 18-21 and 25. The 12.90 euro entry price includes a 2 euro entry fee and a "Mass" (liter) of Salvator or other Paulaner beer, or a non-alcoholic drink. Table reservations can only be made for groups of ten; others are seated on a space-available basis. Learn more and book online at paulaner-nockherberg.tinyurl.com/y89jwqv.

berg.com/strong-beer-festival. Other Munich breweries hosting Starkbier festivities include Augustiner, Faschingsbrauerei and Loewenbrau; ticketed events tend to sell out fast.

Chinese New Year parade in Paris

Lunar New Year, which fell on Feb. 16 this year, is China's most important festival and driver of the world's largest seasonal human migration. One of the biggest celebrations of the holiday in all of Europe happens in Paris' 13th arrondissement, in the heart of the Chinese quarter.

On Sunday, the lively district is the site of a Chinese New Year's parade made up of marchers in vibrant costumes, musicians, folkloric dancers, sounds of firecracker explosions and the dragon and lion dances, believed to bring luck and prosperity. Typically attracting some 200,000 spectators, it's billed as the city's biggest parade of the year. The marchers set off at 2 p.m. from 44 avenue d'Ivry and proceed along avenue de Choisy and the Boulevard Masséna. The nearest metro station is Gobelins. Entry is free. [Online: tinyurl.com/y89jwqv](http://tinyurl.com/y89jwqv).

AMELIE DUPONT
Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau

Paris' biggest parade of the year unfolds Sunday to celebrate Chinese New Year.

Etruscan cultural exhibition in Karlsruhe

One of mainland Europe's earliest known civilizations was that of the Etruscans, who occupied an area corresponding to modern-day Tuscany and north-

ern Lazio, Italy from approximately 1000 BC to 100 BC. Many aspects of their advanced culture shaped early Roman history and society before eventually being absorbed and vanquished by it. Recent archaeological discoveries have shed new insights into the sophistication, power and complexity of their culture.

Through June 18, the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe, in cooperation with the Italian Ministry of Culture, presents a comprehensive portrait of Etruscan culture through a temporary exhibition. "The Etruscans — Global Culture in Ancient Italy" consists of many items being shown for the first time in Germany, true-to-life reconstructions and interactive digital installations. Some 400 exhibits provide a look at Etruscan city-states, the jewelry produced by its goldsmiths, artwork depicting banquets painted on burial chambers and the role of women in society.

The museum at Schlossbezirk 10 is open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily except for Mondays. Adults pay 12 euros for entry; tickets for youth cost 9 euros or 3 euros according to age, and a family ticket goes for 25 euros. Online: etrusker.landesmuseum.de/en/

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



Rossini restaurant in Kaiserslautern, Germany, sets itself apart with wonderful food and great service.

The upstairs dining area (above) and the basement dining room (left) provide elegant settings for a romantic experience. On warm days, the outside seating area has the casual atmosphere of a backyard barbecue.

PHOTOS BY WILL MORRIS
Stars and Stripes

After Hours: Germany

By WILL MORRIS
Stars and Stripes

In the brief time I've been in Kaiserslautern, I've found only a handful of restaurants here worth eating at, much less worth writing about. That always presents a dilemma: do I let everybody know and find that all of the tables are taken the next time I visit, or do keep my big mouth shut?

With the exception of a few fast-food joints on base, Rossini is one of only two restaurants in Kaiserslautern that I've eaten at more than once. Both times it was great. The food was amazing, the staff genuinely sought to give the best service possible, and the setting was elegant but casual. It is everything a restaurant should be and more.

I first went to Rossini this past summer with my wife and infant son and ate on the outside patio. I had the pork scaloppini. I can't remember what my wife had; food was too good to bother paying attention. The scaloppini was an ample size, perfectly cooked and covered with a rich, full-bodied red sauce sprinkled with bubbly mozzarella cheese. It was accompanied by a small side of spaghetti Bolognese, fresh bread and a green salad with a creamy vinaigrette house dressing.

The food was so good that I was curious to see if the quality was consistent or a fluke. So I ordered the same thing again this month. I wasn't disappointed. Same portion size, same delicious cutlet with the same amazing sauce. My wife, who has an eye for picking the best thing on a menu, ordered the grilled pork cutlet with a side of herbed pasta. I honestly



can't say which one was better; she gave me only one taste of her entree and kept the rest to herself.

Despite the high quality of the food and ample portion sizes, the bill was 30 euros (\$37.23) for two people. Most dishes average about 9 euros. The fare is Italian with a few German mainstays. Specials are offered daily.

One cool thing about Rossini is the way it is laid out in a historical building. The first floor and the basement with vaulted ceilings set the stage for any romantic date, but the seating outside, which is open during warm weather, makes you feel like you are eating at a summer barbecue with a host who really knows how to cook. If you have an infant child, you will be warmly welcomed, and eating on the patio is definitely the way to go.

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Left: Pork scaloppini with a side of Bolognese. Right: A green salad with fresh bread. Whatever you order, it's all wonderful at Rossini, a refreshing change for an eatery in Kaiserslautern.

ROSSINI

Location: Steinstrasse 45, Kaiserslautern, Germany 67657

Hours: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 5:30-11 p.m. daily except Tuesdays, when it's closed.

Prices: Entrees average 9 euros (\$11.20)

Menu: Some items are in English; English-speaking staff can help with the names of other dishes.

Phone: (+49) (0) 0631-65952

— Will Morris

Just 3 parts to luxurious lettuce salad

By ELIZABETH KARMEL
Associated Press

How often have you tossed the dinner salad? I am not talking about tossing it with dressing! If I had a nickel for every time that I've seen the contents of the salad bowl left untouched and droopy at the end of the night, I would have a lot of nickels.

This fact is understandable as it is difficult to make a simple dinner salad that is as appealing as the main course.

My solution to this common problem is to make a green salad that complements the other dishes.

My recipe is tied to my long-standing love affair with the simple French "salade verte" (green salad). Whenever I am in France, I order a salade verte with everything that I eat. It is a simple salad traditionally made with butter lettuce — sometimes called Boston lettuce — and a mustard-rich perfectly emulsified vinaigrette dressing. The perfect emulsion makes it creamy and it clings lightly to the lettuce, accenting the sweet delicate leaves with just the right amount of tang.

I can't get enough of the soft sweet lettuce and the perfectly emulsified dressing. This is a salad that I actually crave. This three-ingredient salad goes with everything from steak to beer-can chicken to omelets, stews and soups.

My Luxurious Lettuce Salad is deceptively simple, but relies on the absolute best ingredients for it to be a success. That is, fresh butter lettuce — I like the living lettuce or farmers market lettuce — fleur de sel (coarse sea salt from Brittany), and your favorite first-press extra-virgin olive oil.

LUXURIOUS LETTUCE SALAD

Servings: 2
Start to finish: 10 minutes
Ingredients:

1 head Boston or Butter lettuce, washed and dried

Fleur de Sel (a few pinches)
Best pressed extra-virgin olive oil
Fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Place the lettuce leaves in a large bowl, sprinkle with about 2 pinches of fleur de sel or coarse sea salt. Toss. Drizzle with 1-2 teaspoons (or more to taste) of olive oil, toss very well to coat all the leaves.

Let sit for 5 minutes and toss again. Add a little more oil if the leaves are not coated but be careful not to use too much oil, otherwise the salad will be heavy and the lettuce will get soggy. Add freshly ground pepper if desired.



ELIZABETH KARMEL/AP

Three-ingredient Luxurious Lettuce Salad is deceptively simple, but the ingredients involved must be of the highest quality.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

KNOW & GO

DIRECTIONS

The Schirn Kunsthalle is at Roemerberg, 60311 Frankfurt. By car, head for the city center and follow signs to Parkbereich D, Dom/Roemer. The garage here costs 2 euros per hour, 1 euro on Sundays and German holidays. By public transportation: the Dom/Roemer subway stop is closed for construction. Take tram lines 11 or 12 to the nearby Paulskirche stop.

TIMES

The exhibit runs until May 27. Opening hours: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays

COSTS

Admission is 12 euros (\$15) for adults, 9 euros for youths and seniors and free for children under 8. A family ticket for two adults and their children up to 17 is 24 euros.

INFORMATION

The Schirn website is schirn.de/en/Home.html. You can buy tickets there.

— Michael Abrams



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

A man photographs Jean-Michel Basquiat's "Dos Cabezas," one of the works on display at the Basquiat. Boom for Real exhibit, at right, at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, Germany, during a media viewing event. The two heads in "Dos Cabezas" are Andy Warhol and Basquiat.



FOR REAL

Artist Basquiat's contributions celebrated at Frankfurt exhibit

BY MICHAEL ABRAMS

Stars and Stripes

He was a painter, a poet, a musician, a DJ and a record producer. In other words, an artist of many mediums. His star shone brightly on the 1980s New York art scene. But, like some heavenly bodies, it was quickly extinguished.

Jean-Michel Basquiat, an African-American born in Brooklyn, was only 27 years old when he died of a drug overdose in 1988.

Today he is considered one of the significant artists of the second half of the 20th century.

Basquiat. Boom for Real, now showing at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, Germany, is an extensive exhibit of his art from beginning to end.

It features about 100 works and comes to Frankfurt after a run at the Barbican in London, where it set a house attendance record.

Basquiat first got noticed in the late 1970s, as part of the graffiti tag team SAMO with high school friend Al Diaz. They sprayed on a backdrop of rising crime rates and city bankruptcy.

To better understand the early '80s NYC art scene, watch the short video interview with Diego Cortez, curator of the 1981 "New York/New Wave" art show, at the beginning of the exhibit. Then check out Basquiat's works hanging near that exhibit.

Basquiat had many influences: music, art and the streets of New York City, for example. One of his idols was Pablo Picasso; another, as for many young artists of the time, was Andy Warhol. A whole section of the exhibit is dedicated to his relationship with the Pop Art giant.

The Mudd Club, an early 1980s New York City underground club, was another source of inspiration and networking for Basquiat. A regular there, he mixed with the likes of Madonna, Brian Eno, Warhol and Grace Jones, to name a few.

It was a place where the city's art scene congealed.

The breadth of Basquiat's work is astounding. From postcards done with artist Jennifer Stein to the artwork for hip-hop record covers to giant collages, it seems the artist tried his hand at just about everything. There is photography, poetry and hip-hop music he produced, influenced by Fab 5 Freddy, an early pioneer of the genre.

African-American culture and especially jazz influenced the artist as well, especially saxophone legend Charlie "Bird" Parker. He and other black musicians are motifs in Basquiat's works.

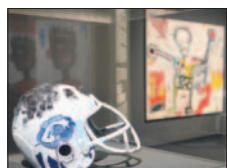
Another motif is the artist himself. Self-portraits abound in the exhibit, as do crowns, one of his trademarks.

Besides art, there are other interesting items on display, such as his birth certificate, the books he read and a check for \$10 made out to Warhol.

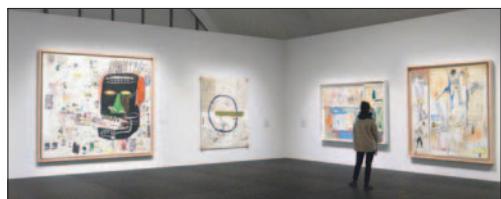
Pages from his notebooks make two interesting works on display. He wrote in concise capital letters — his handwriting almost art on its own.

The exhibit ends with a snippet of the film "Downtown 81," a view of the downtown art and music scene starring Basquiat.

abrams.mike@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripes_photog



"Untitled (Football Helmet)," above, is one of the works by Jean-Michel Basquiat on display at the Basquiat exhibit at the Schirn Kunsthalle. In the background is "Untitled." Below, a visitor views other works by Basquiat — who died in 1988 — on exhibit until May 27.



TRAVEL BRIEFS

Second entrance might ease crowds at Vatican

A visit to Rome would hardly be complete without touring the Vatican.

But while a tour of the Vatican to see its stunning art collection, including Michelangelo's famous masterpieces, is likely forever memorable, so are the notoriously long lines to get into its galleries.

About 25,000 people visit the Vatican each day, according to Lonely Planet, and the wait in line can sometimes last hours, with some people being turned away entirely. Annually, the famed tourist attraction in the heart of Rome receives about 5.9 million visitors.

Luckily, someone recognizes the problem.

"It is conceivable that people can't get in," Vatican Museums chief Barbara Jatta said, according to Lonely Planet.

To help ease the crunch, a second entrance is now under construction. The additional entrance will offer access to less well-known parts of the fascinating and sprawling complex, including to the Ethnological Museum, which houses 80,000 objects and works of art.

Jatta has also pitched a second route to the Sistine Chapel, which draws enormous crowds on its own. It would be accessed around the Apostolic Palace, and opening hours would be extended under the new plan.

No word on when construction of the second entrance is slated to be complete.

Additional offerings in the works include a high-tech, multimedia show that's being produced with the help of famed rocker Sting, which would be based on Michelangelo.

Dating back to the 16th century, the Vatican Museums showcase some of the most famous pieces of classical and Renaissance art on the planet, including work by Leonardo Da Vinci and frescoes by Raphael.

Michelin gives record number of 3-star ratings

The number of French restaurants honored with the gastronomic world's most coveted prize — a three-star rating in the Michelin Red Guide — rose to 28 this month, a new record.

The two new additions to the three-star club were Christophe Bacquié at the Castellet hotel and Marc Veyrat's La Maison des Bois, both in southern France. They cement France's place as the premier dining hub with the highest number of top-scoring restaurants in the world.

Michelin France is considered the most prestigious of the publication's 31 global editions by the fine food establishment.

But although the guide is famed for making the fortunes of chefs, it's equally famous for breaking them with its system of rating top restaurants with one to three stars.

Michelin has defended itself over persistent claims that its stars reward pomp and presentation instead of food and that it brings unbearable scrutiny to its laureates.

From wire reports

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facebook/Ehrbar-Böblingen

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Sa 8am to 6pm

Sun 9am to 6pm

www.dasstadtcafe.de

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

National treasures

Artifacts offer window into ancient world of Japan

BY HIROSHI HIRAMATSU

The Japan News/Yomiuri

The Saitama Prefectural Museum of the Sakitama Ancient Burial Mounds is located among a group of nine ancient burial mounds in Gyoda, Japan, including large-scale examples about 328 feet long, that were built between the latter half of the fifth century and the early seventh century.

The mounds belonged to a powerful regional clan, and are in the center of what used to be called the Sakitama county of Musashi Province up until the Nara period (710-794), at the latest. Saitama Prefecture was named after the county in the early period of the Meiji era (1868-1912), when Japan's han fiefdom system was replaced with the prefectural system.

An enormous number of artifacts were discovered in an archaeological excavation launched by the prefecture in 1967. The Sakitama Museum opened in 1969 to manage and display the artifacts, and it subsequently took its current name in 2006.

There are 107 national treasures in its collection. One of the highlights is the Kinsakumei Tekken, an iron sword inlaid with gold that was found among the funerary goods in the Inarimaya Burial Mound.

The 2.4-foot-long sword has an inscription in gold that begins, "Inscribed in the seventh month of the shingai year." The shingai year is thought to be 471, though some believe it to be 531.

An X-ray examination in 1978 of the rust-covered sword revealed gold kanji Chinese characters on both sides. After the rust was removed, 115 characters emerged. This was the largest number of characters found inscribed on an iron sword from the Kofun period. What's more, the characters remained clearly legible.

The sword — deemed a once-in-a-century discovery — is now kept in a special display case to prevent oxidation.

The inscription is thought to describe the life of the person who was buried in the mound. It



JAPAN NEWS/YOMIURI

Climbers cheer at sunrise from the summit of Mount Fuji on July 1, 2017. Sunrise and sunset are popular times to be at the UNESCO heritage site's summit.

KNOW & GO

Address: The Saitama Prefectural Museum of the Sakitama Ancient Burial Mounds is located at 4834 Sakitama, Gyoda, Saitama Prefecture.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (until 5 p.m. in July and August). Closed Mondays.

Costs: Admission is 200 yen (about \$1.80) for adults, 100 yen for students of high school age and up, free for younger students.

Phone number: (048) 559-1111



A jade magatama bead is one of the museum's treasures.

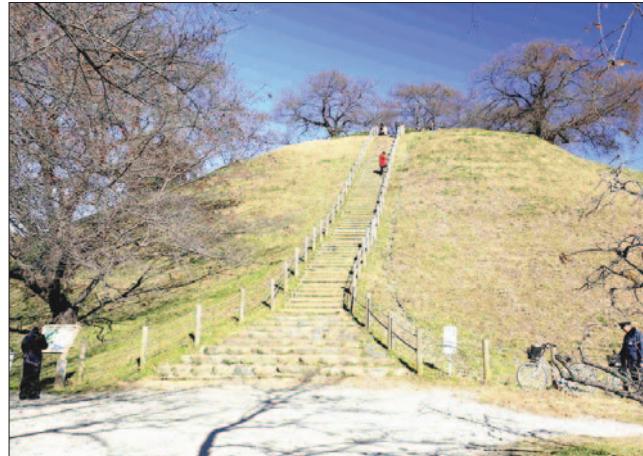
reads, "I and my ancestors have served as guards for the royal family for generations. I serve the great King Wakatakeru and have contributed to his rule over the whole land."

King Wakatakeru is commonly thought to be Emperor Yuryaku. The inscription shows how the Yamato court — Japan's first unified state — ruled over leading clans in the Kanto region.

At the museum, visitors were heard saying in amazement, "It's unbelievable that the gold characters remain so clear."

Other national treasures on display include a mirror and a magatama comma-shaped bead.

Museum director Yoshinori Seki, 59, said, "I want visitors to feel the romance of a hidden ancient world via the many national treasures that slumbered in the burial mounds."



PHOTOS BY TAKU YAGINUMA/for The Yomiuri Shimbun

The Maruhakuyama Burial Mound is one of Japan's largest Kofun burial mounds at more than 328 feet in length. Many artifacts were unearthed in the region in 1967, and are being displayed at the Saitama Prefectural Museum of the Sakitama Ancient Burial Mounds.



Above: This deity-and-beast mirror is said to show the relationship that existed between powerful local clans and the central government.



Right: Visitors look at the Kinsakumei Tekken gold-inlaid iron sword, which has 115 clearly legible Chinese characters on both sides.

ture and the Fujinomiya trail in Shizuoka Prefecture. The thresholds are 4,000 climbers per day on the Yoshida trail, and 2,000 on the Fujinomiya trail.

The U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has called for measures to address the congestion at the summit area of Mount Fuji, which is often very crowded at sunset. The two prefectures are planning to consider concrete measures.

A scientific committee of the Mount Fuji World Cultural Heritage council comprising officials from the central government, the two prefectural governments and others held a meeting Feb. 15 in Tokyo. The two prefectures presented a plan to establish thresholds for the Yoshida trail in Yamanashi Prefec-

The number of climbers per day peaked at 4,544 on the Yoshida trail, and 2,656 on the Fujinomiya trail, during the July-September climbing season last year, according to the Environment Ministry.

The plan aims to reduce the number of days on which climbers exceed the thresholds to three days or less on the Yoshida trail, and two days or less on the Fujinomiya trail.

Mount Fuji was registered as a UNESCO world cultural heritage site in 2013 for reasons including it being an object of worship for Japanese people and an inspiration for art such as ukiyo-e paintings, which went on to influence overseas culture.

Proposal aims to reduce Mount Fuji climbers by up to 25 percent

The Japan News/Yomiuri

Japan's Yamanashi and Shizuoka prefectures proposed last week to reduce congestion on Mount Fuji by 12 to 25 percent per day during the peak period by lowering the number of climbers using two of the mountain's four trails.

A scientific committee of the Mount Fuji World Cultural Heritage council comprising officials from the central government, the two prefectural governments and others held a meeting Feb. 15 in Tokyo. The two prefectures presented a plan to establish thresholds for the Yoshida trail in Yamanashi Prefec-

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific



Above: An outdoor dining area at Irori Sanzoku near Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, overlooks a serene waterfall and pond featuring a statue of Kannon Bodhisattva.

Left: Tourian, left, and Kamado, right, are two of the Sanzoku restaurants in the Kuga Area known as the "Chicken Shack" by those at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

PHOTOS BY JAMES BOLINGER/Stars and Stripes

After Hours: Japan

BY JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

I'd been in Japan for only three days when I first heard about the "Chicken Shack" during an impromptu welcome-aboard brief at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

As Sgt. Maj. Christopher Garza explained the importance of traveling throughout Japan and learning about a new culture, he described a local restaurant that every inbound servicemember should try — Irori Sanzoku, known by Americans as the "Chicken Shack."

I made a note in my planner and eagerly awaited my liberty card, so I could try this legendary eatery in the heart of Yamaguchi Prefecture.

And it is legendary, as far as restaurants near Iwakuni are concerned. A quick Google search for "Chicken Shack Iwakuni" brings up reviews on local blogs and more famous websites such as TripAdvisor.

There are actually three sister restaurants — Irori Sanzoku, Kamado and Tourian — in a spot along Route 2 called Kuga Area. Prices and variety vary, with Sanzoku being the most affordable and Tourian the most expensive.

I picked up a cab from the base, and took a 20-minute ride into the mountains west of Iwakuni — my first trip off the installation since I'd arrived. The drive on a rural highway that winds between steep mountains is reminiscent of West Virginia back in the United States.

When I arrived at Kuga Area, I was immediately greeted by the smell of charcoal. Not the American barbecue joint scent of smoked pork, but something much crispier, like the clean smell of a burning campfire.

I quickly followed my nose through a small courtyard and under a short awning that opened into a beautiful outdoor dining area where benches draped in bright red cloth surround dark blue covered tables. The courtyard overlooks a partially frozen waterfall with a serene pond at its base. A statue of Kannon Bodhisattva, the Lord of Compassion and the Goddess of Mercy, rises from the water to stand watch over diners.

After snapping a few pictures, I was escorted inside and seated at a curved central island with stools made from tree stumps. I was immediately struck by a thin layer of smoke from cooking fires that lingered in the air, making my mouth water in anticipation for what was to come.

I ended up at Kamado, which offers a wide variety of dishes on an English menu. It offers draft beers and sake, but I came for the house specialty — chicken on a stick. To round out my meal, I picked one more item off the house specialty menu — a rice ball filled with salmon and tightly wrapped in nori, or dried seaweed.

The food and drinks came out quickly, likely because I had missed the lunch crowd, and it was easy to taste why a crowd might gather here.

The chicken was as good as advertised by both the sergeant major and local blogs. With a crispy skin, plenty of smoky flavor and baked-in teriyaki sauce, it is a dish that would be popular in any state-side city. And in the spirit of good barbecue, the best way to eat it is to get your hands dirty, especially since a wet towel is provided by the wait staff for cleanup.

While I finished my meal, I enjoyed the atmosphere of a place that is obviously beloved by locals and the Americans who often visit from the air station. The polite staff delivered cold beers, piping hot bowls of noodles and beef, and of course a steady stream of chicken to hungry customers sharing good food and stories.

There are several places to sit, including the island, the courtyard, a balcony overlooking the main floor, and for a more traditional Japanese dining experience, there are several tables where you sit on the floor. One large table surrounds a bed of coals and a large metal koi fish supporting a large steaming kettle.

The smaller Irori Sanzoku across a small parking lot has a large outdoor seating area, while Tourian is situated in a large multi-story structure built to resemble a Japanese castle.

My meal, including one beer, came in just a touch over 1,700 yen, or about \$15. A price well worth the trip, although you should take a taxi if you plan to drink.



The so-called "Chicken Shack" near Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, is known for its chicken on a stick. Also pictured: a salmon and seaweed rice ball.

KAMADO

Location: 1380-1, Kugamachi, Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Prefecture

Hours: Open daily, 10 a.m. to midnight. Last order at 11 p.m.

Prices: Specialty items start at 400 yen for a small bowl of noodles and top out at 1,300 yen for tea and buckwheat noodles.

Dress: Casual

Directions: A 20-minute drive from MCAS Iwakuni along Route 2 in the Kuga Area. The website below provides directions from the air station.

Information: www.irori-sanzoku.co.jp

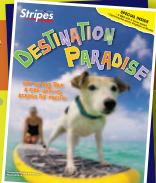
— James Bolinger

There is much more to see at Kuga Area than just the restaurant. Had I not had a taxi waiting on me, I easily could have stayed for several hours and enjoyed the forest, the other restaurants and a few more beers.

This is definitely a place I will return to, likely very soon, as there is much more to taste and see at the "Chicken Shack" of Iwakuni.

bolinger.james@stripes.com

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

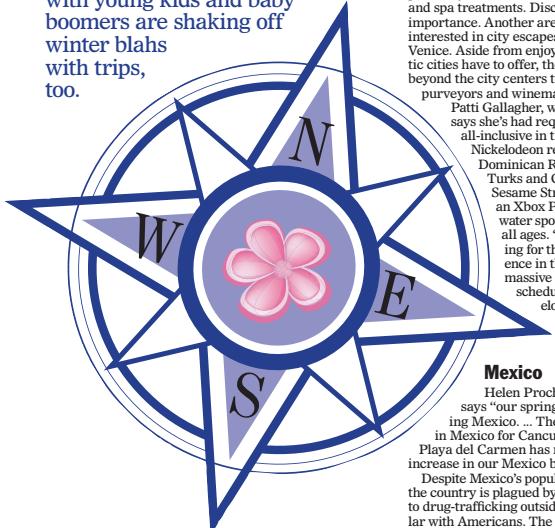
Destination: *adventure*

Travelers seeking more experiences, less beach on Spring Break trips

BY BETH J. HARPAZ
Associated Press

Spring break isn't just about "fly and flop" anymore — heading to a beach where you lie in the sun all day drinking piña coladas.

These days travelers want to balance relaxation with experiences, whether it's tours that offer cultural immersion, yoga retreats or hiking adventures. Beach destinations remain popular, but travelers are also using spring break to explore Europe, Asia and other parts of the world. And while college students and 20-somethings love their March and April getaways, families with young kids and baby boomers are shaking off winter blahs with trips, too.



What travel agents say

The Associated Press sought input from the American Society of Travel Agents for a spring break snapshot.

Misty Ewing Belles at the Virtuoso Network said in an email that she's "seeing families trade traditional 'fly-and-flop' vacations for more active/adventure trips." Many other agents agreed.

"The big trend is that clients are looking for unique adventures," said Rob Karp with Miles Ahead. "Travelers are interested in becoming global citizens in places like Vietnam, Costa Rica, Italy and Nicaragua. Parents are taking their kids all over the world and immersing them in many different cultures. Spring break is also a chance for families to take trips globally, like Japan for the cherry blossoms, Machu Picchu in Peru for Easter or the Temple Mount in Israel for Passover."

Ann Petronio, with Annie's Escapes, said she's seeing family trips outside "the usual Caribbean destinations. This year's trips are more adventurous. For example, I have two sisters traveling together to Iceland. And a father-daughter headed to Dubai and the Maldives" on the daughter's college break.

Dana Storr, with TravelStore, says they're seeing interest in Belize "for those seeking tropical climates. These clients are looking toward transformative getaways. They want a culturally enriching experience while also having the opportunity to scuba dive/snorkel, take yoga classes and spa treatments. Disconnecting is of utmost importance. Another area is Europe. They are interested in city escapes to Paris, Florence and Venice. Aside from enjoying what these fantastic cities have to offer, they are all day-tripping beyond the city centers to experience local food purveyors and winemakers."

Patti Gallagher, with Vacations by Patti, says she's had requests for "family friendly all-inclusive in the Caribbean," like a Nickelodeon resort in Punta Cana, the Dominican Republic, or the Beaches Turks and Caicos resort, which has Sesame Street-branded activities and an Xbox Play Lounge for kids plus water sports and gourmet dining for all ages. "Families seem to be looking for that Disney-type experience in the Caribbean without the massive crowds and exhausting schedule," Gallagher said. Nickelodeon opens its first property in Mexico in 2019 about 20 minutes from the Cancun airport.

Mexico

Helen Prochilo at Promax Vacations says "our spring break clients are booking Mexico. ... The pricing we are finding in Mexico for Cancun, Riviera Maya and Playa del Carmen has resulted in a 24 percent increase in our Mexico bookings year to date."

Despite Mexico's popularity and affordability, the country is plagued by violence, mostly related to drug-trafficking outside tourist areas popular with Americans. The U.S. State Department



AP photos

While beach destinations remain popular for spring break, travel agents say customers are also demanding unique cultural experiences, such as seeing the cherry blossoms in full bloom along the Sumida River in Tokyo, above; and active outdoor adventures, such as visiting El Castillo at the Chichen-Itza ruins in Yucatan, Mexico, below.



blacklists some regions of Mexico as no-go zones, but Quintana Roo, where Cancun and Cozumel are located, and Baja California del Sur, home to Los Cabos, were rated 2 under the State Department's new travel warning system, which means "exercise increased caution." The State Department's warnings about Mexico also refer to reports of tainted alcohol at some resorts that have resulted in visitors getting sick or blacking out.

Youth travelers

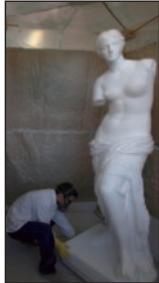
Tiffany Harrison, U.S. marketing manager at STA Travel, which specializes in student and youth travel, says outside of traditional beach destinations like Cancun, South Padre Island in Texas and Panama City Beach, Fla., they're seeing a surge in interest in Europe, with London, Madrid and Dublin as the top three.

Other trends from STA: "adventure-focused, off-the-beaten-path destinations," with mountain trekking, sailing and island-hopping; road trips, as evidenced by a 25 percent surge in campervan rentals since 2016; and "endangered destinations" like the Arctic, on trips that emphasize sustainability.

Flights

Booking.com found that spring break 2018 is going to be 2 percent more expensive than 2017, but three places are showing lower prices compared to last year. Playa del Carmen, Mexico, 20 percent lower than 2017; San Diego, 17 percent lower; and Panama City Beach, Fla., 4 percent lower.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



MASTERS OF PLASTER

Greek workshop
re-creates ancient
masterpieces



BY THANASIS STAVRAKIS
Associated Press

It might be the closest an artist can get to time travel: Painstakingly re-creating the sculptures of Greece's ancient masters.

A group of artists working for Athens' Culture Ministry has the exclusive right to make the officially certified copies, which are meant for sale in Greek museum shops.

"The standard is very high. And every artist tries to emulate what was done by the artist in ancient times," supervisor Stelios Gavalas, a sculptor by training, told the Associated Press. "For us, it is a very big honor to have daily contact with works of the great artists of antiquity."

The team of about 50 fine arts graduates works on a range of sculptures, from a 3-inch hare from Roman-era Macedonia to a 7-foot statue of Zeus, or Poseidon, made in the mid-5th century B.C. and one of the star exhibits of the National Archaeological

Museum in Athens.

All are full-scale, made out of plaster in molds and painstakingly hand-painted to match the hues of the original piece, be it metal, marble, clay or even ivory. Plaster is used because

it doesn't shrink while drying, unlike other materials such as resin, and allows reproductions that are completely accurate in size.

Casts are made in the museums where the originals are kept, and the ensuing molds are stored in the workshop, together with more than one thousand prototype copies, some dating from the late 19th century.

Each reproduction can take days to complete, with the mid-5th century B.C. Zeus or Poseidon, requiring nearly two months from beginning to end, including the time required for the plaster to dry. That copy sits near the top of the price range, costing \$3,700.

For the time being, the copies can only be bought at major museums and archaeological sites. The proceeds are meant to help fund Greek archaeology and conservation projects.

Culture Minister Lydia Koniordou promised at a recent news conference that by the summer they will also be available for online purchase.

Clockwise from top left: a sculptor cleans a copy of the head of Hygieia, goddess of health, at Athens' Culture Ministry lab on Jan. 22; sculptors work in the lab; an employee wraps an ancient replica; a sculptor paints a plaster copy of the 7-foot bronze statue of Zeus, or Poseidon; plaster replica busts are placed in storage; a copy of Venus de Milo (Aphrodite), goddess of love, beauty, pleasure and procreation, made out of plaster, goes through color processing.

PHOTOS BY THANASIS STAVRAKIS/AP

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Dark side of the gloom

Phoebe Bridgers isn't afraid to sing about scary things

BY JEDD FERRIS
Special to The Washington Post

The lyrics on Phoebe Bridgers' at-times startlingly candid debut album, "Stranger in the Alps," can be unsettling — especially considering they're coming from a 23-year-old.

In the chilling piano ballad "Killer," she sings, "When a machine keeps me alive, and I'm losing all my hair, I hope you kiss my rotten head and pull the plug." Earlier in the song, which meanders like a twisted lullaby, Bridgers admits she's frightened by her obsession with the serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer.

"I have this thing in the back of my brain that dares me to think of the most disturbing thing," the emerging singer-songwriter says in a recent phone call from California. "I thought something was wrong with me. I was going down YouTube wormholes of interviews (with serial killers), and Dahmer was the most disturbing to me, because he didn't seem insane."

Although Bridgers vividly details anxieties such as these, she doesn't sound troubled. She's affable and forthcoming as she discusses her willingness to reveal fears and document moments of melancholy in her music. She's a fan of such somber folk practitioners as Mark Kozelek and the late Elliott Smith, both easily detected influences in "Funeral," the most blatantly sad song on "Strangers in the Alps." The diaristic dirge starts with haunting feedback that relents before a gently fingerpicked acoustic guitar ushers in the opening line, "I'm singing at a funeral tomorrow for a kid a year older than me."

By the time Bridgers reaches the chorus, she's lamenting, "I'm so blue all the time, and that's just how I feel / Always have and I always will."

She's often this direct, unconcerned about oversharing; being unfiltered is part of her process. "When I'm writing," she says, "I try to think about what would make a song better before worrying about personal opinions."

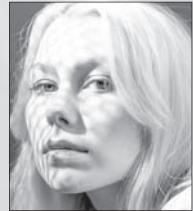
Bridgers' lyrics may not provide a peaceful, easy feeling, but the delicate, emotive lift in her soothing voice makes her brutally honest revelations enticing.

Her stark, confessional songs are often delivered with a subdued blend of roots reverence, indie edge and emo angst. She would like to be a little more punk rock, but, as she puts it: "I don't have a great scream."

Growing up in Pasadena, Calif., Bridgers attended the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, where she received classical voice training and began writing songs. She started busking, playing open mics and cutting her teeth as a singer-songwriter on a variety of stages around Los Angeles, including punk club the Echo and the defunct Room 5 Lounge — places, she says, "that were nice to me."

Bridgers eventually caught the attention of Ryan Adams, who invited her to record at his studio, which resulted in a three-song, seven-inch vinyl record that contained an earlier version of "Killer," released on Adams' Pax-Am Records in 2015.

Since then, Bridgers has continued to pick up endorsements. In recent years she has opened for and performed with fellow wistful tunesmiths Julien Baker and Conor Oberst, who makes an appearance on "Stranger in the Alps." Bridgers started making her first full-length album without a label, but eventually



"I have this thing in the back of my brain that dares me to think of the most disturbing thing. I thought something was wrong with me. I was going down YouTube wormholes of interviews (with serial killers)."

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



Lamar



MARVEL STUDIOS-DISNEY/AP

Chadwick Boseman stars as T'Challa, the ruler of Wakanda, in "Black Panther."

Lamar's 'Panther' has power

Various artists

Black Panther: The Album
(Music From And Inspired By)
(Top Dawg/Aftermath/Interscope)

At times, the Kendrick Lamar-curated "Black Panther" album feels like a stand-alone set, only loosely related to the Marvel film for which it's named. But the album is a solid, entertaining listen that, in places, has its power.

There's the opener and title track, in which Lamar seems to be speaking for himself, the Compton, Calif., native, while also channeling T'Challa, the Marvel character who reigns over the fictional African nation of Wakanda, and protect it in his secret role as superhero Black Panther. "King of my city, King of my country, King of my homeland / King of the fifty, King of the fallen, we living again." Lamar raps, establishing the connection between himself and the film, and perhaps making Lamar fans feel a little closer to the powerful figures they're set to see in theaters.

Lamar is reflective, too, rapping about struggles on and off-screen, the natural trag-



edies and the man-made, on the poignant "Pray for Me," featuring The Weeknd. "Who need a hero? / You need a hero, look in the mirror, there go your hero," Lamar rhymes.

But neither Lamar, nor his lyrics, are what make "Black Panther The Album" remarkable. Instead, it's all the layering — of artists, styles, sounds — and even language, like on the somber "Seasons," which opens with a verse from South African rapper Sjava, whose bars need no translation to be felt.

Things get super impressive with "Bloody Waters," featuring Ab-Soul, in which Lamar has somehow married together the "Yes, Lawd!" high energy of

Anderson Paak with the melancholy depth of English singer James Blake.

The easy transition from one voice to the next is thanks in no small part to lead producer Sounwave, whose shifting beats keep ears glued to the music. An R&B opening gives way to a tough West Coast vibe on "Paramedic!" featuring hip-hop collective SOB x RBE.

Blake is back on another jewel, "King's Dead," with Lamar, Jay Rock and Future. "The Ways" with Khalid and a singing-Swae Lee is adorable, while "Redemption," which brings together California singer Zacari and South African singer Babes Wodumo, is a dance-inducing Afro-beat gem.

For some, "Black Panther The Album" will stand as just another star-studded compilation piece instead of a masterful album matching the intensity of the highly anticipated film. Certainly, the argument could be made. But for the ones who are excited about the film — its diversity, symbolism and vision — they'll find what they're looking for.

— Melanie Sims
Associated Press

FROM PAGE 36

inked a deal with indie tastemaker Dead Oceans. With help from producers Tony Berg and Ethan Gruska, she shaped the record with a couple of stronger songs from her teen beginnings, some newer material and a Kozelek cover, "You Missed My Heart."

One of the album's last additions, "Motion Sickness," is its most accessible tune. Bridgers uses the song to vent about her confused feelings for a condescending ex, and although it was written in a cabin in Idaho, Bridgers doesn't sing it with her usual isolated approach. Instead, she levels not-so-subtle jabs at the song's subject while propelled by a galloping bass line, steady beat and a hint of guitar grit.

While recording the song, Berg would turn out

the lights during Bridgers' vocal takes, which she says made her singing uninhibited. It's a refreshing way to hear her release emotional turmoil — lost in a breezy pop groove.

"That experience set me up to carry songs through live, in a way that I couldn't before," she says.

Bridgers will get plenty of chances to play live between now and the end of April on her first headlining tour, which hits dozens of U.S. cities. "All the things people hate about touring, I'm excited for, because I've never done it before," she says. "I'm excited to see places I've never seen and be in the van and see if I get car sick while reading. I love going on walks and talking to people. Getting out of my own head is the thing I'm looking forward to the most."

John Oates

Arkansas (Thirty Tigers)

The less celebrated half of the pop duo Hall & Oates has tapped into a rich vein of American roots music on his latest offering, an album that demonstrates his seriousness about the music-making craft.

No, "Arkansas" probably won't let John Oates live down a legacy in which the mere mention of a song title can leave its melody rattling around your head for hours. The duo, during its heyday, combined a string of catchy-to-cloying singles ("Private Eyes") with soulful ballads that held up better over time ("Sara Smile").

But Oates, a Philadelphia native, has lately been exploring earthier sounds in and around Nashville. His search led him to "Arkansas," a project that began as a tribute to Mississippi John Hurt and evolved into a deeper exploration of traditional themes.



Oates describes the result as "Dixieland dipped in bluegrass and salted with Delta blues." He smartly enlisted A-list Nashville players to help, including mandolin wizard Sam Bush and guitarist Guthrie Trapp. Their playing on songs by Jimmie Rodgers, Hurt, Blind Blake and other legends elevates them considerably, and the Oates originals mixed in are good fits.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press

I'm With Her

See You Around (Rounder Records)

It feels like fate must have brought together three already successful alt-folk musicians whose angel voices blend as seamlessly as their strings. The lovely sounds of I'm With Her — the trio of Sarah Jarosz, Aoife O'Donovan and Sara Watkins — are on splendid display in the group's first full-length album, "See You Around."

The product of a marathon songwriting session in a Vermont barn and recorded mostly live, the album has a warm, intimate feel even when the undertones are melancholy.

On 12 tunes, the trio swaps lead vocals and guitar instruments in tales of love won, lost and in between. Jarosz's soulful mandolin, a tribal fiddle from Watkins (Nickel Creek) and subtle synth and piano from O'Donovan (Crooked Still) add layered texture.

Jarosz opens the title track in her clear, eerily soprano, a beautiful breakup song with lifting, lush harmonies that make this the one to put on rewind.



Another standout is Gillian Welch's "Hundred Miles," a hardship road tale that has Watkins starting off starkly a cappella, her bandmates and instruments joining in at a typically languid Welch pace.

The bluegrass-y instrumental "Waitfords" opens with a jaunty fiddle and raises a question: Might the title refer to the bucolic Vermont village of the same name? Maybe it was even where the ladies ventured to replenish their supply of Heady Topper beer — the only time, the liner notes say, that they left their songwriting seclusion.

— Lindsey Tanner
Associated Press

Fischerspooner

Sir (Ultra)

Fischerspooner began 20 years ago as a brash electro-clash duo that was as much performance art as it was dance music. But in the nine years since their last album, frontman Casey Spooner and multi-instrumentalist Warren Fischer have raised their skill level and their ambitions. And with "Sir" (Ultra), they pair their usual synth-driven shock and awe with a new emotional depth, aided by producer Michael Stipe, who once dated Spooner, and Boots and Stuart White from Beyoncé's "Lemonade" team, whose influence is felt most in the lush "I Need Love."

The combination gives the single "TopBrazil" a surprising twist to the Depeche Mode-influenced sound, one of several songs in which Spooner takes



inspiration from gay life on Fire Island.

The mix of swagger and confusion Spooner brings to "Strut," where he declares, "This is not love," only to be followed by "This is not-not-love," shows how much nuance Fischerspooner is trying to create and how impressively they succeed.

— Glenn Gamboa
Newsday

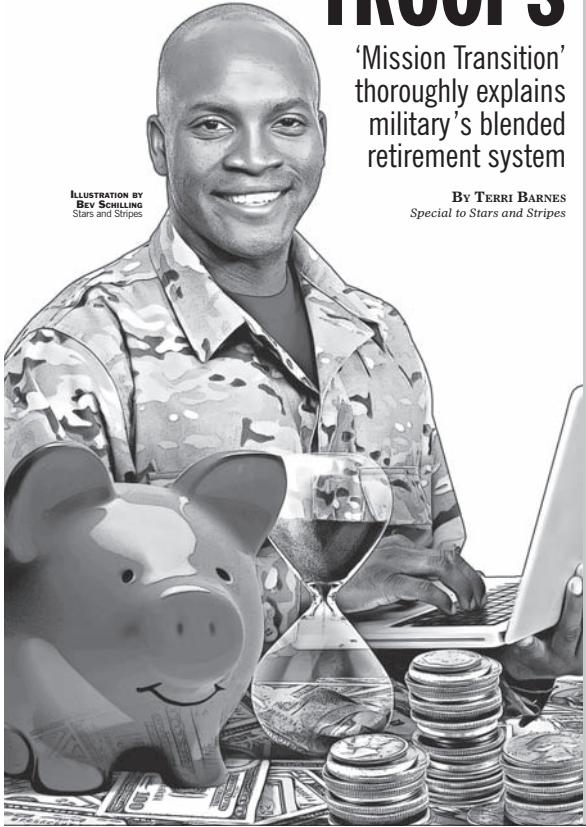
WEEKEND: BOOKS

GUIDING TROOPS

'Mission Transition'
thoroughly explains
military's blended
retirement system

BY TERRI BARNES

Special to Stars and Stripes

ILLUSTRATION BY
BEV SCHILLING
Stars and Stripes

3 people sort out love, injustice in 'An American Marriage'

BY MIKE FISCHER
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The plot of "An American Marriage" — Tayari Jones' fourth and best novel — could be aptly summarized through a single sentence from one of its three protagonists: "I never imagined myself to be the kind of woman who would find herself with both a husband and a fiancée."

Even Celestial's use of reflexive pronouns betrays how internally divided she is — par for the course in a novel that creates three fully rounded and internally conflicted characters from this love triangle while nevertheless nimbly refusing to take sides.

Easier said than done, when one considers the circumstances leading to Celestial's dilemma. After Celestial has been married in Atlanta for just "a year

and some change" to Roy, her husband is wrongly convicted of rape and sentenced to 12 years in his native Louisiana, where he and Celestial had been visiting Roy's parents.

Long before Roy's conviction is overturned five years into his sentence, Celestial has moved in with Andre, the boy next door whom she's known since she was a baby and who'd been Roy's best man.

"What did Roy do to deserve any of this?" Celestial's father angrily asks, when she and Andre tell him they plan to marry. "He didn't do anything but be a black man in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Making the transition from military life into the civilian world is not as easy as it sounds. For one thing, they speak a different language out there. They have no idea what it means to PCS or go TDY, and as for BAH, forget about it. Never. Forget it.

Entering civilian life is a new adventure; leaving military life requires plenty of preparation and planning. It's much more than a career change. It's a cultural shift with

many personal and financial adjustments. The advent this year of the blended retirement system adds yet another ingredient to the mix for some military families.

For all of the decisions and planning

involved in separation from the military — whether after a few years or a full 30 — it helps to get the perspective of someone who has been there. Enter "Mission Transition: Managing Your Career and Your Retirement," by Janet J. Farley.

The author speaks the language of both worlds, and her book helps translate military experience into civilian success with a multifaceted approach. A seasoned career counselor and the author of several books about careers and transitions, Farley is also the spouse of a retired soldier, so she has firsthand experience in military-to-civilian transitions. Using her personal experience, professional skills and careful research of the latest pension changes, she has created a comprehensive guide to a healthy transition from military to civilian life.

A few years ago, a book with "retirement" in the title would have been for those nearing the end of a career. Not so today. With the new blended retirement system, which has a significant personal savings component, planning for retirement starts in the first few years of service.

Farley's book includes a careful comparison of both plans. This is particularly helpful for military members who have to decide whether to opt into the new retirement system or stay with the old one.

By the end of the year, military members who joined between Jan. 1, 2006, and Dec. 31, 2017, must choose

between remaining with the traditional or "legacy" retirement — full retirement benefits for those who serve 20 years or more — or opting into the blended system, which has a participatory savings program and a reduced 20-year pension. To get the most out of the new plan, members contribute to the savings plan and get matching funds from the government. Servicemembers can then take their retirement savings with them into civilian life, even if they serve only a few years.

Anyone who joins the military after Jan. 1 doesn't have a choice, and after Dec. 31, neither will anyone else.

The major implication of the new blended retirement system is that the military member is now in the driver's seat when it comes to decisions about investments and savings for retirement. The Department of Defense, of course, provides guidance and mandatory training about the new system. Farley points out that education is key to maximizing the potential for the new program, which can be personalized to meet the savings wants and needs of the individual.

Along with thorough information about the retirement system, "Mission Transition" gives direction about planning ahead for all the ways life changes when a military career comes to an end. She includes a detailed examination of the expenses military members need to consider when entering civilian life, such as replacing life insurance, dental insurance, and yes, BAH and other active-duty benefits.

In her book, Farley discusses all kinds of veterans benefits and services and how to access them. She also gives guidance for job-hunting, templates for résumé writing, and good advice for adapting to a civilian workplace.

"Mission Transition" is more than a helpful resource for military members closing in on retirement. It's a book for those in mid-career making important decisions about whether to re-enlist. It's a book for those just starting out in military life, or for any military member who wants to plan well for the future, whatever it holds.

Terri Barnes is a journalist and author whose husband retired after 30 years in the Air Force. She is the author of the memoir *Elva Rusia Publishing*, her book, "Spouse Calls: Messages From a Military Life," is a compilation of her long-running column in Stars and Stripes.

Should Celestial have stood by her man? A good but flawed person, would he have remained truly stood by her?

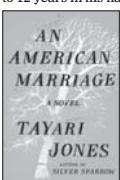
Jones doesn't offer easy answers. But she does make clear that much as Roy and Celestial loved each other during their salad days as up-and-comers in Atlanta — he in sales, she a folk artist making expensive dolls — their marriage wasn't perfect. Roy hadn't entirely lost his roving eye, strong and independent, Celestial is ambivalent about marriage.

If Roy hadn't been black — in a country, Jones suggests, where no black man is safe — perhaps they'd have made it; one can imagine them right at home in the world of Anne Tyler. Jones writes about marriage with an equally sophisticated awareness that the substance is in the details, not all of them pretty. Marriage, one of Jones' characters says, teaches you your limitations.

As with the murders that haunt Jones' "Leaving Atlanta" and the personal betrayal that sows a whirlwind in "Silver Sparrow," Jones' characters here try and fail to outrun the limitations of their own history — itself forever entangled in the fractured history of black America.

That history isn't just about race; Jones also never loses sight of its intersection with class. Celestial and Andre come from comparatively well-off Atlanta families; Roy is an illegitimate child raised by a poor family in rural Louisiana. Roy had fantasized about naming a child Future and avoiding mention of a cotton-picking past. Once in prison, he must pick soybeans.

Celestial is Jones' finest creation to date; selfish because she must be to be true to herself, she nevertheless tries to honor the many others — mostly men — who want to shape her in their image.



WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

“The Girl Without Hands”: The feature film debut from Sebastian Laudenbach (better known for making short films) is a production based on a Brothers Grimm tale that delivers a deep and haunting beauty in an animation style that is so primitive in design it looks to be one step above cave paintings. The style works because each partially drawn line or hastily hand-painted moment is as powerful for what's not on the screen as what is there. The unique visual style is used to tell the story of a young woman who is accidentally sold to the devil in return for a river of gold. What the devil never anticipated in making the bargain was the girl would be so pure of heart she would be able to elude him. Her escape comes at a price when her father is forced to cut off her hands. As has been the case with other adaptations of the story, there have been some changes made in how the tale unfolds, but overall it is a smart and skillfully presented lesson about love, life, greed and salvation. But, it is the stunning visuals that make the film a reminder that movies are definitely a powerful art form.

“Midnight, Texas”: A vampire, a witch and a psychic walk into a bar. The setup for what could be a very macabre joke is the abbreviated description of the NBC series. Based on the novels by Charlaine Harris, “Midnight” follows Manfred Bernardo (Francois Arnaud) as he heads to the nearly dead Texas town of Midnight as a way of escaping his demons. His skills will come in handy as the once safe haven of Midnight is being threatened by parties, ranging from a very nasty biker gang to a very confused police department. The death of a local woman the day Bernardo arrives in town doesn't help matters, but does give the first episode a nice mystery hook. It's up to those with special abilities to save the town and themselves. “Midnight, Texas” might sound familiar in the beginning, but it has all the elements to feed the need for fans of the genre.



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AP

From left, Mel Gibson, Mark Wahlberg, Will Ferrell and John Lithgow star in the recent DVD release “Daddy’s Home 2.”

Also available on DVD:

“Daddy’s Home 2”: Dusty (Mark Wahlberg) and Brad (Will Ferrell) must deal with their fathers.

“The Florida Project”: Young friends spend a summer at a budget motel managed by a stern man who hides a deep kindness.

“The Star”: Animated recounting of the birth of Jesus told from the point of view of the animals.

“Same Kind of Different as Me”: Two very different men must get past their differences to find a connection. Greg Kinnear stars.

“In His Own Home”: Examination of the 2010 shooting of Kofi Adu-Brempong by University of Florida campus police responding to a 9-1-1 call.

“The Nine Lives of Marion Barry”: Documentary on how Marion Barry went from political extinction to dominating Washington city politics.

“The Vanishing Black Male”: Melvin Jackson, Jr., speaks with African American men of all walks to determine the state of the black man in America.

— Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service

Finding her mark

‘Bull’ star Geneva Carr recalls a time a prop went missing

By NINA METZ
Chicago Tribune

In life, the deck is usually stacked. But in TV, you can escape that feeling for an hour or so with the CBS legal drama “Bull,” where a sense of fair play is a bedrock of the show's ethos. The trial consulting firm, led by Michael Weatherly's psychologist Jason Bull, has a bevy of high-end experts on staff, including the unflappable Marissa Morgan, a veteran of the Department of Homeland Security and a neurolinguistics expert. She's played by Geneva Carr, wearing one of the best wardrobes on TV right now.

“Bull” pulls in big numbers for CBS with its mix of humor and its courtroom setting, and for Carr it's her first long-term TV role. A Tony-nominated stage and TV actress, she said there's a “work ethic to the theater that absolutely serves television because I never think I have another take. Television is so fast-paced, you can't ask for one anyway. Once they get what they need, they're moving on.”

Finding her mark, though, has been a work in progress. “Michael always makes fun of me. They put tape down for the spot where you're supposed to go — in the theater they tell you where to go and you remember — but I guess I was looking to the ground to find my spot and one of our directors was watching me on camera and he was like, ‘Geneva? I can see you looking for your mark.’ So I was trying to do it really inconspicuously but I kept looking on the ground, and Michael was like, ‘Geneva, you're gonna have to figure that out!’”

That's pretty mild as work embarrassments go.

“The one thing about being an actor is, you cannot have any pride because your career ebbs and it flows, it goes up and down; you are constantly embarrassed and you have to roll with it,” she said. “I don't have any ego, on set or off.”

Example: “I used to dress up as Tweety bird, you want to talk humiliating? And Tweety bird really suffered, I'm just going to say that. You have to be under 5-foot, 4-inches to fit into the costume and it's hot as bejesus in there. I used to work at the Javits Center (conventional hall in New York) to make money, and I'd go around in character and shake children's hands at the auto show or whatever. I don't want to tell you the stories because they're terrifying. I don't know why, but people have a lot of mixed feelings about Tweety.”

“But,” she said, “that's not even my most embarrassing story!”

My worst moment

“When I was first acting, I was in an off-Broadway play and I had some very experienced actors around me. The one that saved me that day was Rob Sedgwick, who is Kyra Sedgwick's brother. He's a great guy and a fantastic actor and we were doing this play called ‘The Weatherbox’ that's very dramatic. It's

Geneva Carr stars as Marissa Morgan on “Bull.” “The one thing about being an actor is, you cannot have any pride because your career ebbs and it flows, it goes up and down; you are constantly embarrassed and you have to roll with it,” she says.

CBS Broadcasting, Inc.

about three siblings who are estranged and their mother is on her deathbed in the hospital. And there's a scene where I'm arguing with my brother in the kitchen and I have to threaten his life with this knife that I just see on the table!

“In the scene, I'm supposed to come out and give a piece of my mind to my brother and tell him how I felt about him — and I realize, there's no knife on the table. The prop is missing. And Rob and I look at each other and I'm like a deer in the headlights and I'm trying to remember my lines and emotive and live it all and I'm terrified! And the line's coming up where I have to threaten his life with this nonexistent knife, and right before I had to do something — and he knew I just didn't know what to do — he turned to me and said, ‘Don't you try to threaten my life with that book?’”

“So I picked up this book — and by the way, he's this 6-foot, 3-inch muscle-bound man — and, like, 110 pounds of me is trying to threaten his life with

a book, it was unbelievable! I'm sure the audience was thinking, ‘How does this woman think she's going to kill her brother with this book? Is she going to beat him to death with a hardcover?’

But Rob really saved me, and we have laughed about it for years. He was so great, because I wasn't experienced enough to just live in the moment but he was. So he taught me a lot, about being present and making it work no matter what. Because I had no idea what I was going to do because the scene hinged on that moment.”

The takeaway

“You learn No. 1: Check your props. You have to verify that your props are on a table in the wings because there are stagehands that bring them to the set between scenes. Now I make sure everything's where it needs to be.”

“And you learn No. 2: When you are on stage you are in battle, and the people you work with have your back.”



WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

WHEN YOUR HEADACHE ISN'T NORMAL

Doctors say patients should pay attention to frequency, intensity

BY JILL U. ADAMS
Special to The Washington Post

Headaches are a common ailment — so common, perhaps, that many of us just accept them as part of life. "When I do routine physicals, I'll ask about headaches," says Michael Munger, a primary-care physician in Overland Park, Kan. He is always surprised that many of his patients report frequent headaches when asked but never bring them up otherwise. "Some people just live with it."

Tension headaches, sinus headaches and migraine headaches are among the most common varieties.

Tension headaches affect 30 to 70 percent of the population, says Nauman Tariq, director of the Headache Center at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore. These are usually mild and can be alleviated with nonprescription pain relievers.

Migraine headaches affect 12 to 27 percent of people, Tariq says. These range in severity and frequency, "from two headaches a year to daily headaches," he says. Over-the-counter drugs are used for migraines, as are prescription drugs such as the triptan group of medications including Imitrex, Zomig and Maxalt.

Sinus headaches are a result of excess mucus in nasal passages and are typically associated with allergies, colds or flu. Antihistamines or decongestants can relieve the pressure and pain.

Munger, who is also the president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, says headaches often are innocent, but they can be symptomatic of more-serious conditions such as brain tumors or aneurysms. "You don't want people to overreact, but you also don't want them to underreact."

So, should you see a doctor for your headaches? It depends, of course, on frequency and severity — how much they interfere with your life and whether you can manage them through self-care or by taking over-the-counter analgesics such as aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen and naproxen.

However, these drugs come with their own risks. "Over-the-counter drugs seem safe, but not so when they're taken frequently," Tariq says. "Long-term or frequent use can be more damaging than the headache itself."

For instance, aspirin and ibuprofen can cause gastrointestinal bleeding, ulcers and kidney problems with long-term use; Tylenol can cause liver damage with high doses.

When to see a doctor? Munger advises the rule of twos: "More than two headaches a week for more than two weeks." That rate of occurrence doesn't mean it's an emergency, he says, but it's worth checking out.

A doctor's visit is likely to include questions about the individual's headaches — when they happen, what they feel like and what triggers them.

When headaches happen can lead to indications about triggers. Munger says patients often have some clue about these already. "The goal is to avoid triggers," Tariq says, citing some common ones (not all of which can be avoided): Certain foods, dehydration, alcohol, sleep deprivation, weather changes, menstrual cycle, work and stress.

The location of pain on a patient's head gives clues as to the type of headache. Tension headaches derive from muscle tension, and they "start at the back of the head, then radiate up and over the crown," Munger says. Sinus headaches, in contrast, tend to affect people on the face, commonly above or

below the eyes. Migraine or vascular headaches often are localized to one side of the head and can be accompanied by nausea and visual oddities such as flashes and blind spots. Munger says some patients report very specific locations for their migraines, such as "on the left side of my head over my ear."

Doctors will look for red flags, too, asking about numbness or tingling, nausea, speech disturbances or memory problems. Such symptoms may indicate — or rule out — a more serious condition. They may ask about conditions associated with headaches. For instance, "50 percent of people with chronic headache also have anxiety and depression," Tariq says. "Addressing those issues, with psychotherapy and/or meds, can help headache."

Your doctor may suggest a prescription medicine, such as a muscle relaxant for tension headaches or one of the migraine drugs. Steroid or antihistamine nasal sprays may be recommended for sinus headaches.

Drugs are not the only solution. Tariq says certain procedures interfere with the transmission of pain. With a treatment called nerve block, an injected deadening agent — anesthetic, steroids or Botox — can quiet nerve activity. Alternatively, neurostimulation techniques use vibration or cold to compete with pain messages, he says.

For tension headaches — or, as Munger calls them, muscle headaches — neck and shoulder massage can help, as can changing the position at your desk. Studies have shown the benefits of certain physical therapy techniques in easing headaches.

Stress relief plays a role, too, Munger says.

"If you're under an inordinate amount of stress, try relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation."

QUICK HITS

5 steps to staying healthy all winter

BY JJ VIRGIN
RodaleWellness.com

There's a lot to love about winter: hitting the slopes, curling up by the fire, and celebrating holidays with family and friends.

But colder weather can also mean the beginning of fevers, stuffy noses and sore throats.

Surprisingly, winter colds and flu are entirely avoidable — with the right combination of healthy habits and smart strategies, you can strengthen your immune system and keep thriving all winter long.

The tips below will help you defend against illness this winter and feel your best.

Dial down inflammation

It's critical to reduce inflammation in your body to prevent illness.

Fighting chronic inflammation suppresses your immune system, making it tough to defend against germs. The main offenders behind inflammation are a high-sugar impact diet and the foods most likely to cause food intolerance like gluten, soy and dairy.

Be mindful of your sugar impact and include plenty of immune-boosters in your diet, including anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats, coconut oil and nutrient-packed superfoods.

Take care of your gut

Your gut is home to 70 percent of your immune system and holds trillions of microbes that play a key role in your immune function.

That's why it's critical to keep your gut healthy, so you have more good flora to fight off viruses and bacteria that can make you sick.

Including foods with probiotics and prebiotics in your diet is a great way to build up the good guys in your gut microbiome — think full-fat, unsweetened coconut or Greek yogurt and fermented foods like kimchi and sauerkraut.

Optimize your Vitamin D

Research proves that not only can vitamin D help ward off illness, but it can also reduce the duration of an infection. That makes vitamin D vital to staying healthy.

Spending time outside in the sunshine is the best way to get vitamin D — 15 to 20 minutes of direct sun exposure is all it takes for your body to produce this potent hormone.

If you're struggling to get the sun exposure you need in gray winter days, then consider a high-quality vitamin D supplement, preferably one with vitamin K to boost absorption.

Get high-quality sleep

Studies show you need seven to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep to trigger the production of immune cells that attack foreign invaders.

As a matter of fact, subjects in one study who slept fewer than six hours a night the week before were four times more likely to come down with a cold than those who got more sleep.

Get more antioxidants

Antioxidants like vitamin C lower your risk of infection and protect your immune cells.

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WEEKEND: FAMILY

Homespun history

Quilter includes names of 5,000 lynch mob victims

By BILL LAITNER

Detroit Free Press

The quilter's fabric is soft, her stitches shine with gold-thread and the setting for seeing her handiwork is the stillness of a church.

Yet, viewers can't help but be jarred because, attached to the top of this 10-by-10-foot piece of black cloth, a pair of full-sized hang nooses seem to leer in bitter tribute to the countless African-Americans who died at the hands of lynch mobs.

Beneath the nooses, quilter April Shipp from suburban Detroit stitched thousands of names of African Americans, all known to have lost their lives to mobs, most on the end of a hang noose, some by other means including being tied to a tree and burned alive. Shipp did the research, extracting names that she calls "my 5,000 souls" from news stories about each murder, compiled by historians in books she acquired.

"It's terrible to think about, but they're resting now, and they live on in my cloth," Shipp said.

Her beautiful tribute to cruelty took its place recently amid nearly 60 other quilts, most sewn in bright cheery colors, in the annual show of quilts unfurled each February at Detroit Unity Temple. Each quilter in the church's audience — including some from other churches, and others who submitted work through quilting societies — was asked to stand "and be acknowledged for their beautiful work" during a recent Sunday service, said the Rev. Gregory Guice, the church's pastor.

In observing African-American history month, metro-Detroit's black quilters said their tradition speaks to the homespun history of American slaves, forced to stitch makeshift fabric from scraps of their masters' clothes.

"And they a lot of times used this to send a message — that's why we have several, what we call, protest quilts in this show," said Shirley Phillips-Horne, 80, of Detroit, a church member and co-organizer of the quilt show.

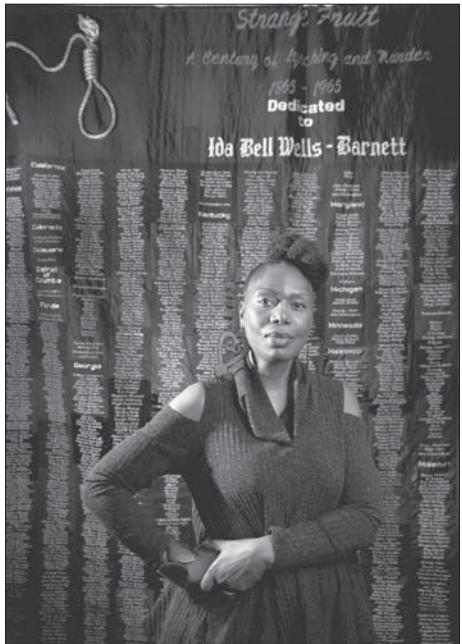
One protest quilt has, stapled to it, the actual paper receipt for the last poll tax paid by the quilter's grandmother in the early 1960s — remnant of a barrier to voting for generations of blacks in the South.

The stitches in Shipp's quilt bear witness to a more sordid history, stopping viewers in their tracks.

"I love what she did with this," said church member Alma Greer, 84. "There's so much to learn with this."

Shipp said she named her soft, shining testament to cruelty after a song about lynching by jazz legend Billie Holiday. Embroidered atop her quilt are the words "Strange Fruit — A Century of Lynching and Murder, 1865 to 1965."

She listed victims state by state. Under the southern states, the rosters seem endless, with names that suggest macabre cruelty. Brothers were hanged together; mothers and



ROMAIN BLANQUART, DETROIT FREE PRESS/TNS

April Shipp of Rochester Hills, Mich., is showing several of her quilts as part of a group exhibit for Black History Month at Detroit Unity Temple in Detroit. The quilt behind Shipp, "Strange Fruit," lists names of African Americans who were lynched and murdered between 1865 and 1965.

their children strung up side by side, Shipp said.

Under Michigan, only two names shine in gold thread. Beneath the names Eddie Cook and Albert Martin, her quilt reads "And twenty seven others unnamed." Among those 27 unnamed victims, Shipp included 25 blacks who — according to news stories of the time — were killed by roving mobs and by police during Detroit's race riot of June 1943.

Shipp's quilt has been displayed at several museums around the country, including Detroit's Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History, although its permanent home is in her house, she said.

"This took me three years," said Shipp, 54, a native of Detroit who lives and sews at her home in Rochester Hills, Mich.

By day, she's a shop assistant for Fiat-Chrysler of America in an auto-research lab in Auburn Hills, Mich. After hours, she sews and is known for it. Recently, Shipp turned out 100 black armbands — embroidered on her computerized sewing machine — for officers' mournings to wear at the funeral of slain

Detroit police officer Glenn Doss.

Quilts are a handicraft sewn throughout history by people of all races; historians say the process of sewing two or more layers of fabric together to make a thicker, padded material goes back thousands of years.

Still, African-Americans say they have a special fondness for quilting. One recent trend? Using cloth made in Africa, said Cynthia Ferguson, a Detroiter who imports quilt-sized swatches in bright designs from Mali and Ghana, then sells them to Detroit-area quilters.

Like most quilters, African Americans habitually fashioned patterns with a technique called "patchwork quilting" — using scraps of cloth in various shapes and multiple layers to create bedding, and sometimes to make clothing or purses. Although Shipp's "Strange Fruit" with its all-black background, appears not to be a patchwork design, it is.

"You have to look close-up, see, I used different types of black cloth to show the different walks of life these people were from."

"Because you could be anyone and get lynched," Shipp said.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



For a real education, binge-watch Olympics

Two weeks ago, I obliviously plopped onto my well-worn spot on the sofa to watch the Opening Ceremonies of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games. Although I knew the general idea behind most of the sports featured, I had no idea what a "double Michael Chuck," "a hog dog" or a "Bellman spin" were.

But after meticulously recording every broadcast; obsessively watching while ignoring my family responsibilities, my marriage, and my personal hygiene; and downing a case of Pringles and an entire bag of Dove squares — I have learned to speak Olympics and I can teach you, too!

Most of the sports are fairly straightforward. Speed skating, Alpine and cross-country skiing, ski jumping, hockey and sledding uses terms that laypeople can understand from the comfort of their lounge furniture.

While watching the luge, bobsled and skeleton for instance, we might hear terms such as "track," "sliders," "curve," "wall" and "ice." Even the densest of us knows that the fastest sled to cross the finish line wins. (Although I must admit, I initially wondered if "skeleton" sledding was so named because hurling oneself down an ice chute head first at 80 miles per hour might very well rip flesh from one's bones.)

However, there are a few Winter Olympic sports that have terms and rules that are so confusing, they mystify Pringles-munching armchair spectators far and wide.

For example, figure skating appears to involve ice skaters completing series of jumps, flips and spins for technical and style points. Simple enough, right? But when Johnny Weir stated that a skater's "triple Axel triple toe is under review" and that she "finished her flying camel sequence with a haircutter," I wondered if he was watching a three-ringed circus. And when Tara Lipinski told us that a skating pair "began their program with the dreaded twizzle sequence" and "lost grade of execution points for their death spiral," she was not describing a couple trying to kill each other with poisonous licorice.

It took me hours of binge-watching, and a little help from Google, but I learned that each jump (Axel, Lutz, Salchow, toe loop, loop, flip) is defined by how the skater launches and how many rotations are completed. Also, skating programs include a variety of turns and spins such as the Biellmann, flying camel, pancake, back-scratch, shotgun, cannonball, haircutter, twizzle and death spiral.

The next winter event that sent me googling was the snowboarding halfpipe. Everyone knows who Shaun "The Flying Tomato" White is, but when the commentators said he might attempt "a massive 18-foot air-fakie with a stalefish grab followed by a switch stance McTwist and back to back 1440s," I checked to see if there were subtitles on the screen. Snowboarders clearly do not speak English. Theirs is a colloquial language understood only by resort rats with bushy hair who say things like, "Let's shred first tracks in the powpow, Bro."

But there's a method to their madness. Olympic snowboarders earn points by catapulting themselves high above a 22-foot ice wall and executing complicated tricks. Each trick involves a specific series of moves with cryptic labels. Without getting into what "a beurt curtains grab" or "a backside rodeo" are, the basic terms I learned are: wind up, hit, air, spins that range from one to four rotations, grab and stomp. "Nuff said."

Lastly, with finals happening this weekend, I must say a word about curling — an obscure event involving bumpy ice, lumps of rock, Swifter sweepers and the oldest competitors at the Olympics (Cheryl Bernard of Canada is my age, God bless her) shouting at each other. With confusing terms — skip, bend, hack, hog line, house, button and hammer — and players screaming at each other — "Yup! Hurry hand! Right up! Right off! No line! Good line! Clean!" — it's no wonder the players all have day jobs.

No one gets it. However, I learned that if you ignore the words, curling is essentially a simple game of giant shuffleboard. On weird ice. With brooms. And old people.

If you can't walk the walk, you gotta talk the talk, right?

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesofflife.com

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FACES

Giving back

Kelly Clarkson brings unique 'Voice' to competition series

By RICK BENTLEY
Tribune News Service

One of the big complaints about television music competition programs is more often than not, the winner — or even some of the top runners-up — won't be heard from right away. They might eventually have a song do well on the charts, but there is a long process to finding that success.

Kelly Clarkson, who joins Alicia Keys, Adam Levine and Blake Shelton as the commanders of the spinning chairs on "The Voice" for its 14th season, sees the primary purpose of the NBC music competition series as giving talented singers the opportunities to start building a career that will last more than a moment.

"I think you need to cultivate the record you want to be proud of," Clarkson says after a press conference with TV critics to talk about being a "Voice" judge. "It's not necessarily about all the people who hit right after, but about cultivating all these careers that might be blossoming right now and they have not reached their full potential.

"It's so silly to rate success because some of our most famous artists weren't successful in their own lifetimes."

That's where she comes in to the music mix. She works with young singers making their way through the show's format, which features five stages of competition: the blind auditions, the battle rounds, knockouts, playoffs and the live performance shows. Clarkson joins the team as a coach, but it's a return to the competition series for her. She appeared on "The Voice" as a key advisor in past seasons helping to mentor the show's aspiring artists.

Clarkson feels like she's come full circle in helping young artists start their careers.

"It's definitely awesome to be able to fight the



Kelly Clarkson, second from left, a first-time coach and superstar recording artist, is ready to compete against fellow coaches Blake Shelton, left, Alicia Keys, second from right, and Adam Levine, right. The show starts Feb. 27 on AFN-Pulse. "I still feel like the same kid that entered this industry," Clarkson says. "I still have the same sense of awe about it and the same excitement."

three. The coaches on my season have all won a season. So it's definitely cool to be able to tell them that I've navigated a competition and I think bring that kind of knowledge to the table." Clarkson says, "I still feel like the same kid that entered this industry. I still have the same sense of awe about it and the same excitement."

Clarkson doesn't like it when she and the other three coaches are called judges because the last thing she wants to do is be the final word on what a performer is doing right or wrong. Her intention is to help each contestant cultivate his or her natural abilities to make it through the long competition process.

Audrey Morrissey, executive producer of "The Voice," echoes Clarkson's comments about this being a series that isn't

about immediate success but about helping young talent get better at what they do. There's always the possibility that "The Voice" will produce a performer who hits it as big as "American Idol" alums Clarkson or Carrie Underwood. But the timeline for "The Voice" participants is different.

Clarkson's coaching to help the talent get better will be based on how, over the past 15-plus years, Clarkson has seen both the highs and lows of the music industry. She had some immediate success after winning the first "American Idol" in 2002. The song she sang on the finale, "A Moment Like This," was released two weeks after the win, but Clarkson's first album, "Thankful," didn't hit stores until the following year. That was because she

wanted to make sure every note was just right, and that meant being patient.

Clarkson's concern for details has paid off. She has sold more than 25 million albums and 36 million singles. The Texas-born singer-songwriter's list of hits includes last year's album release, "Meaning of Life." Her work has resulted in a long list of awards including three Grammys, 12 Billboard Music Awards and two Academy of Country Music Awards.

She's managed to do all of this while raising four children. Clarkson jokes that they can be so challenging that at times a "little wine" helps. Her serious answer to what motherhood means to her is that she has found that the children teach her as much as she teaches them.



"Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" hits theaters on June 22. There's already plans for a third film in the franchise.

More roars: Universal has plans for third Jurassic World movie

Four months before "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" hits theaters, Universal Pictures has announced plans Wednesday for a third installment in the re-booted dinosaur franchise.

Universal says "Jurassic World 3" will land in June 2021. The film is to be written by Emily Carmichael and Colin Trevorrow, the director of 2015's "Jurassic World." Carmichael co-wrote the upcoming

sci-fi adventure "Pacific Rim Uprising."

"Jurassic World" ranks among the biggest box-office hits. It launched with a \$208.8 million opening weekend and finished with \$1.7 billion worldwide in ticket sales.

Directed by J.A. Bayona, "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom," starring Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard, opens June 22.

From The Associated Press

Study finds female protagonists decreased in 2017 films

From wire reports

2017 may have been the year of "Wonder Woman," but a new study finds that female protagonists were down 5 percent in the year's 100 top-grossing films.

The Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University released its annual "It's a Man's (Celluloid) World" on Thursday. It found that females comprised 24 percent of protagonists last year, down from 29 percent in 2016 despite high-profile releases like "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" and "Beauty and the Beast" — 2017's top two films at the box office.

Researchers determined that while 32 percent of films featured 10 or more female characters in speaking roles, 79 percent had 10 or more male characters.

However, black female characters increased from 14 percent to 16 percent, and Latinas went from 3 percent to 7 percent. Asian females increased from 6 percent to 7 percent. The study analyzed 2,361 characters from 2017's top 100 films at the box office. It has been conducted annually since 2002.

'Muppets' reboot reportedly planned

"The Muppets" may soon be coming to a screen near you — again.

Just two years after Disney revived Jim Henson's famous puppets for a short-lived ABC comedy, Disney is giving Kermit and pals another go, this time on its upcoming streaming service, according to

The Hollywood Reporter.

The service — likely expected in fall 2019 — doesn't have a name yet, but its aim is that it will help the company compete against streaming giants like Netflix with a healthy dose of family-friendly Marvel flicks, among other offerings. In addition to the forthcoming Muppets reboot, Disney's planned service will also include High School Musical reboots and TV shows based on "Monsters, Inc.," "The Mighty Ducks" and Star Wars, according to THR.

Other news

■ Daytime talk show host Wendy Williams says she's taking three weeks off on doctor's orders. Williams says that her doctor told her to take the break to deal with her Graves' Disease and hyperthyroidism. Renurs will air in her absence.

■ Television talk show host Steve Wilkos is facing a drunken driving charge in connection with a single-vehicle crash in Connecticut last month. Darien police say the 53-year-old Wilkos turned himself in Wednesday after learning there was a warrant out for his arrest. He was freed on \$1,500 bond and is scheduled to appear in court March 5 to face charges including operating under the influence.

■ Talk-show host Tavis Smiley is suing his former employer, the Public Broadcasting Service, for breach of contract after he was fired over sexual harassment allegations. The Washington Post reports that the lawsuit was filed Tuesday in D.C. Superior Court against PBS. PBS fired Smiley in December.


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BY RAMESH PONNURU
Bloomberg View

In the effort to reduce gun violence, or gun massacres, should we go big or go small? Should we concentrate on steps that have a consensus behind them, at the risk of not making much difference? Or should we seek to transform American law and culture, even if success looks pitifully unlikely?

The movement to regulate gun ownership has pursued both strategies at once, fighting for incremental progress toward the goal of much tighter restrictions. But the tensions between those strategies are inescapable.

The people who advocate a ban on handguns are a useful foil for the people who don't want any restrictions at all. Yet centering the debate on small changes can demoralize advocates who want to end a bloody status quo.

New York Times columnist Bret Stephens has been arguing that we should be ambitious and set our sights on the Second Amendment. Working within the constraints of the amendment leads to policies such as banning assault weapons and instituting background checks for private gun sales. These regulations will, he thinks, have "negligible" effects on homicide rates. He urges us to "do something more than tinkered with the margins of a legal regime that most of the developed world rightly considers nuts."

Only after repealing the Second Amendment, Stephens says, will we be able to have national gun laws. What those laws would be, he is consistently evasive in describing.

He acknowledges that a repeal campaign looks quixotic today, but cites the struggle for same-sex marriage as an ex-

We should not miss the opportunity for modest improvements because we prefer the comforts of fantasy.

ample of an unlikely triumph. It is a terrible analogy, for two main reasons. First, same-sex marriage never went through a five-decade period of sharply declining popularity. A ban on the civilian ownership of handguns has.

Second, same-sex marriage was able to prevail even though a large minority of Americans opposed it. Even now about a third of the country opposes it. What Stephens is proposing is a constitutional amendment, and the normal amendment process requires the support of two-thirds of both chambers of Congress and three-quarters of the states.

The first step of the Stephens plan is, in other words, to get nearly everyone in the country to agree that the Constitution should not protect gun rights. He offers no explanation of how this would be accomplished. His columns amount to wishing away the disagreement he seeks to overcome. And he has the gall to say that conservatives who reject his idea are the ones who don't "offer anything except false bromides and empty prayers."

I'm tempted to respond that offering thoughtless clickbait is no great service. But the impulse to go big is understandable, especially when you consider the tinkering alternatives that are usually suggested. A ban on assault weapons looks like the worse of both worlds. It would be very hard to achieve — a Democratic Senate mustered only 40 votes for it after the Sandy Hook massacre — and have almost no effect even if it succeeded. Stephens is right about that.

That doesn't mean we should just accept current levels of gun violence and mass murder. The fact that gun violence has been declining for decades should counsel against fatalism. John Cornyn, of Texas, the No. 2 Republican in the Senate, and Connecticut Democrat Chris Murphy, the chamber's leading proponent of gun regulation, have a bill to address deficiencies in the background-check system.

Several states have considered gun violence restraining orders that would enable the disarming of people who give evidence of posing a danger to others. Governments could also create duties to report such dangers, and impose liability on people who give others they know pose a danger access to guns (or bombs).

Those ideas are consistent with the Second Amendment. They can earn support from people who favor gun rights. And they might save some lives. None of them, it is true, would "solve" the problem of gun violence or eliminate the incidence of massacres.

They acknowledge the reality that our country has hundreds of millions of guns and deep divisions over them. They are small, practical steps, useless for providing inspiration or generating invective. But we should not miss the opportunity for modest improvements because we prefer the comforts of fantasy.

Ramesh Ponnuru is a Bloomberg View columnist. He is a senior editor at National Review, visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and contributor to CBS News.

A court shaped by Trump could decide gun control

BY CHARLES LANE
The Washington Post

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas waded into the post-Parkland debate on Tuesday — with an opinion denouncing what he sees as the high court's insufficient support for the right to keep and bear arms.

The lower federal courts, Thomas charged, have been guilty of a "general failure to afford the Second Amendment the respect due an enumerated constitutional right," and the Supreme Court, by failing to check this trend, is treating the Second Amendment as "a disfavored right." The latest example, Thomas protested, was the court's refusal to hear an appeal by Californians who already own guns but seek to overturn that state's 10-day waiting period to buy more.

Jarring as his words sounded at this moment, Thomas' timing reflected the quirks of the court's schedule rather than anything deliberate on his part.

Still, the juxtaposition is a stark reminder of two realities: First, survivors of the massacre in Florida and other gun control advocates are up against a powerful movement; second, even if the Parkland shootings lead to tougher laws — state or federal — the final word could belong to the Supreme Court.

A decade ago, the justices handed the gun rights movement a historic victory, declaring by a 5-4 vote in District of Columbia v. Heller that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to firearm possession.

Like other constitutional rights, this one was not unlimited; the court said there might be room for "prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the

mentally ill," or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in schools or government buildings.

This obviously left a lot unresolved. Is there a constitutional right to bear arms for self-defense outside the home? By what standard, exactly, should federal courts decide whether any particular gun law is constitutional?

For the most part, however, the justices have allowed lower federal courts to fill in those blanks. And those courts, in turn, have generally interpreted Heller as permitting state and local gun regulations.

One exception came in 2016, when the Supreme Court summarily vacated a ruling by Massachusetts' highest court upholding that state's ban on nonlethal stun guns.

The Supreme Court's reluctance to weigh in again reflects the fact that, generally, only blue states enact restrictive laws in the first place. There are consequently few conflicts among the regional circuit courts of appeal for the justices to settle.

In practical terms, this means that the states — red and blue — have been free to pursue their separate approaches, as long as no one tries to prohibit gun (or stun-gun) ownership outright.

There's a certain rough wisdom to that. What Thomas wants, though, is for the Supreme Court to rein in the lower courts — to nationalize a broad individual right to own guns and to require that any limitations face heightened judicial scrutiny, just as, say, restrictions on speech must do.

"If a lower court treated another right so cavalierly," he complained in the opinion, "I have little doubt that this Court would intervene."

And he has half a point. Having placed the right to gun possession on the same plane as the other Bill of Rights guarantees

tees, it is a trifle inconsistent for the justices to leave the precise definition of that right to others.

Obviously — painfully so, after Parkland, and Las Vegas, and Newtown — guns present unique dangers, as the court acknowledged in Heller.

Yet that argues for more guidance from the institution that produced that opinion as to what regulations the Constitution does and does not allow, not less.

Four justices must vote to hear a case; though only Thomas affixed his name to Tuesday's opinion, he is probably not alone in his views. Justice Samuel Alito wrote a vigorous denunciation of the Massachusetts stun gun ban in 2016, and Justice Neil Gorsuch joined Thomas last year when the latter dissented from the court's refusal to hear a challenge to California's ban on carrying a loaded handgun in public.

Thomas seems unable to persuade the court's other two conservatives, Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Anthony Kennedy, to join his project. Like Thomas, both voted with the majority in Heller; unlike him, perhaps, they are not eager to engage in repeated constitutional analyses of blue-state gun laws, each case potentially more politically fraught than the last.

A change in the Supreme Court's hands-off approach may require a change in Supreme Court personnel. The current lineup can't last forever.

Kennedy is 81 and just completed his 30th year on the court. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a dissenter in Heller, is 84. If either leaves before 2021, President Donald Trump — "The right to keep and bear arms protects all our other rights," said in 2016 — would nominate the replacement.

Charles Lane is a member of The Washington Post's editorial board.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Graham moved heaven and Earth *The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer*

On a cool Tuesday night in October 1958, the Rev. Billy Graham walked onto a stage at the Charlotte Coliseum for the 26th sermon of a five-week Charlotte crusade. "Tonight," he began, "I want to talk on how to live the Christian life."

More than 13,000 people had jammed the arena to see the young North Carolina preacher just a decade into his public ministry. By then, Graham had already become one of the most well-known figures in evangelical Christianity; for two years running, he had appeared on Gallup's list of most admired men and women.

He would appear on it 53 more times.

Billy Graham has died, his spokesperson said Wednesday. He was 95 years old — a man who grew up on a family farm in Charlotte, enjoyed friendships with U.S. presidents and world leaders, and perhaps has delivered the Word to more people than anyone who has held up a Bible.

His message — the grace and saving power of Jesus — has reached millions across the globe, but it resonated not just because Billy Graham spoke the words. It's because he lived them.

"A Christian is more than a person who is living up to a system of ethics. A Christian is more than a person living a good moral life. A Christian is a person in whom Christ dwells," Billy Graham, 1958, Charlotte.

How do you measure the reach of a person? You can start with numbers, of course. Billy Graham preached to more than 215 million people at crusades, missions and rallies. His Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, based in Charlotte, puts out a magazine that reaches 425,000 readers. It broadcasts a one-minute radio message that airs on more than 660 stations.

That message is the same as it ever was — Jesus died for your sins, repeat and give your life to him. But the man who delivered it changed through the years. Graham was a fiery Southern Baptist preacher early on — a blend of Bible and brimstone common in evangelical churches then. The man and his message softened, however, as Graham grew older and Christianity shifted its emphasis from God's judgment to God's love. Still, the preacher's purpose endured. He led people to Christ with a message and an example they could follow.

That example was intentional. Unlike preachers then and now, Graham largely steered clear of scandal. In 1948, he and his ministry team drew up the Modesto Manifesto — resolutions regarding financial integrity, sexual behavior, publicity and meaningful partnerships with local churches. Those guidelines separated Graham and his organization from others, as did Graham's clear and deep devotion to Ruth McCue Bell, whom he married in Montreal, N.C., in 1943.

In the high-profile evangelical world, he was an exception — a leader who valued integrity over ego, a husband who lived in a full and thriving marriage, a man who offered not only words to learn by, but a life to admire.

"Then our tongue — this little bit of muscle in our mouth that causes so much trouble, that splits churches and divides homes and ruins lives and damages characters and slanders people — these tongues now are to be disciplined," Graham, 1958.

Graham was not perfect. Some, including Harry Truman, thought he was too eager for publicity. Women were stung by dismissive comments he made in 1970 about feminism.

In 1972, after attending a prayer breakfast with President Richard Nixon, Graham was caught on tape decrying the "stranglehold" Jews had over Hollywood and the media. When the tapes were released in 2002, Graham apologized and said his words then "do not reflect my views."

In his later years, he disappointed some followers and friends who thought his inclusive Christian message was tainted by full-page newspaper ads urging people to vote "for biblical values" and oppose same-sex marriage. (Many suspected Graham's son, Franklin, was the force behind the ads.)

But this is also true about Billy Graham: He embraced integration and the Civil Rights movement at a time it might have alienated his core supporters. In 1953, he told ushers not to erect barriers that separated whites and blacks in his audience, and he warned a white audience against feeling superior to blacks. In 1957, he invited black ministers to serve on his New York crusade's executive committee, and he welcomed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., to join him in the pulpit in New York City.

Later, he told a Ku Klux Klan member, "It touches my heart when I see whites standing shoulder to shoulder with blacks at the cross."

What does that tell us? That all of us have sinned, and all of us are forgiven, and all of it, according to the Rev. Graham, "is only a beginning. It is a lifetime of problems, troubles and difficulties. But you are meeting them with the help of Christ and the Holy Spirit who lives in your heart."

And so he did. He grew and he learned and he erred and he endured. Through it all, Billy Graham not only brought Christ to millions and millions to Christ; he was the man he called on so many to be on that Charlotte stage almost 60 years ago. A man who lived a Christian life.

Russian bots' MO is to exploit Boston Herald

In an entirely predictable development, Russia-based social media trolls haven't missed a beat in the wake of the 13 indictments that came down Feb. 16.

No, they interrupted their railing about the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller just about as soon as the news broke of the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School — to stone the faint lines that always accompany a mass shooting in this country.

"The bots focus on anything that is divisive for Americans," Jonathon Morgan, chief executive of New Knowledge, told The New York Times. His firm tracks disinformation campaigns as do other organizations interviewed by the Times, which all came to the same conclusion. The Russians are continuing to use YouTube, Facebook and Twitter just as vigorously as they did before and after the 2016 presidential election.

The Russian-linked bots even managed to hijack the hashtag #Parklandshtong, which was initially used to spread real information to those concerned about the victims and survivors. The bots were soon successful in exploiting the debate over mental illness via gun control. (Which sensible people ought to take as evidence that we need measures to address both.)

Soon the Twitter accounts drifted into actual disinformation — like the truly fake news that shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz had searched for Arabic phrases on Google.

We know a lot more about how this works now — from the indictments, from the testimony of the nation's intelligence officials just last week, from experts in the field, and from the firsthand accounts from inside the Russian troll factories.

And yet President Donald Trump continues to tweet disparaging nonsense about the FBI, or retweet the pathetic tweet from a Facebook exec who insisted that most of the \$100,000 Russian ad buy was "AFTER the election." Neither Trump nor Face-



Billy Graham poses with his wife, Ruth, and their daughters on the Queen Mary following his arrival in New York on July 7, 1954. Graham, who transformed American religious life, became a spiritual counselor to presidents and the most widely heard evangelist in history, died Wednesday in North Carolina. He was 99.

book's ad guy mentioned the \$1.2 million a month Russians spent on the broader disinformation campaign — one that appears to be continuing apace.

Lesson learned in Tallahassee *Miami Herald*

That was swift. As swift as the shooter was when he killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. It took Florida legislators little time to teach some activist students a lesson by refusing to consider a gun law on Tuesday, even as students from Stoneman Douglas sat in the audience.

One student burst into tears in the gallery, stunned and angered by the slap in the face from adults. Another one, student leader Emma Gonzalez, tweeted: "How could they do that to us? ... We are not forgetting this come midterm elections — the anger that I feel right now is indescribable."

Well done, Florida legislators. You just turned those students against The Establishment. What a mistake.

Do you think the kids will now go away quietly since you flexed your procedural muscle?

Do it.

So welcome to 1968 and the war between the Vietnam protesters and the government. We were sending young people to die then, too, and they rebelled. Kids are now dying in school mass shootings, and they are about to rebel. The example can extend to the early 1960s, when black youths grew sick and tired of being second-class citizens and pushed back and led America into the Civil Rights movement.

So yes, what a mistake by Florida lawmakers to not even pretend to show respect for the horrible things those kids saw last week. The Stoneman Douglas students got on buses and headed for Tallahassee to get some action. You showed them who's boss.

The students had arrived to witness a move to push a bill banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines directly to the Florida House floor.

Rep. Kionne McGhee, of Miami, the incoming House Democratic leader, called for the bill that had not received a committee hearing to be immediately considered by the full chamber at the start of Tuesday's House session. A bit unorthodox, yes. But so is the murder of 17 people in a Florida school.

Democrats used the highly unusual procedure to try to move the proposal directly to the House floor for a debate and vote.

Republicans voted it down, 71-36. Several survivors watching from the visitors' gallery were overcome with emotion, and the action set off a firestorm of controversy on social media.

So there you go, brave Stoneman Douglas student activists. This is what you'll face in the coming days. So brace yourselves.

Build on infrastructure plan *The Orange County (Calif.) Register*

With the federal budget on track to hit deficits of \$1 trillion a year, President Donald Trump's long-awaited \$1.5 trillion infrastructure proposal was finally released.

A core focus of Trump on the campaign trail, the proposal certainly contains some important ideas, but it comes at a time when neither the Trump administration nor congressional leadership have shown any great interest in balancing the federal budget.

A White House budget proposal calling for \$4.4 trillion of federal spending for the 2019 fiscal year against \$3.2 trillion of revenues underscores just how much work there is to right the fiscal trajectory of the federal government before going on lavish spending sprees.

To his credit, the Trump plan doesn't call for \$1.5 trillion in direct federal spending. Focused on the notion that state and local governments best know the infrastructure needs of their communities, the plan calls for \$200 billion in federal spending over the next decade.

Under the plan, the \$200 billion would be used to leverage the additional \$1.3 billion in funding from nonfederal sources like states, localities and the private sector. To do this, the \$200 billion in federal spending would mostly be turned into grants and matching funds to encourage local projects and funding.

While the recognition that local governments best know their local infrastructure needs is a prudent one, it isn't clear that doing out \$200 billion in federal funds across the country over the next decade is especially necessary.

After all, state and local jurisdictions are already capable of raising their own funds to address their respective infrastructure problems. If the idea is to empower states and localities to mostly take on and finance infrastructure improvements anyway, it isn't obvious that \$200 billion in federal funds will make all the difference.

It's also \$200 billion the federal government doesn't have. Perhaps this is why Trump, according to Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., is open to backing a 25-cent federal gasoline tax increase. On top of the existing federal gas tax of 18.4 cents, it's difficult to imagine many Republicans getting behind a federal gas tax of 43.4 cents per gallon.

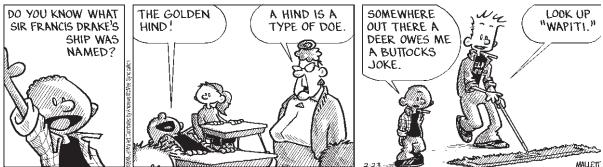
Word of that particular idea drew immediate opposition by Grover Norquist, founder and president of Americans for Tax Reform. "The problem is not that the gas tax is too low," he said. "The problem is that gas tax revenue is siphoned off to pay for projects unrelated to roads and bridges."

But perhaps beyond the actual spending and taxing proposals being discussed, the White House's infrastructure plan does suggest ideas for speeding up infrastructure projects. The proposal calls for an environmental review system that would assign one agency the responsibility for the reviews, a move that the plan suggests could cut down the permitting process to two years or less.

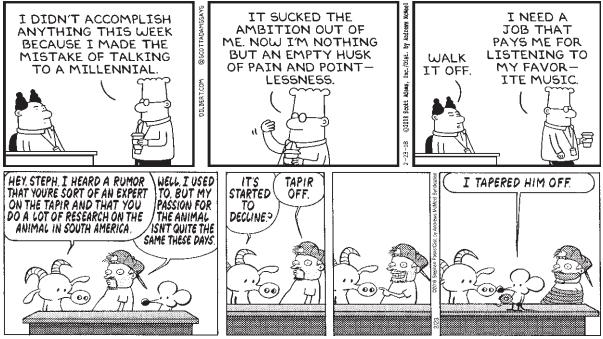
Regardless of whether Trump gets his way on the idea of greater federal spending on infrastructure, removing excessive barriers should always be a goal.

Taken together, while there are some principles and ideas in Trump's plan worth considering, the idea of going on another federal spending spree while deficits continue to grow is incompatible with the sort of fiscal conservatism Republicans at least claim to support.

Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem

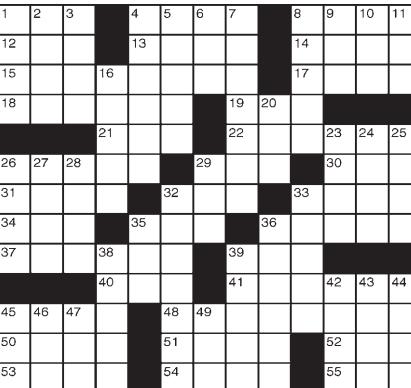


Beetle Bailey



Bizarro

Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

53 Pairs
 1 Director Spike
 4 Play area
 8 Tennyson poem
 12 Golf's Ernie
 13 Addict
 14 Bullets
 15 "Serpico" star
 17 Ham's dad
 18 New York tribe
 19 Omega predecer
 21 — Juan
 22 Fire starters
 26 Drives off
 29 CEO's deg.
 30 Epoch
 31 Freebie
 32 Inlet
 33 Release money
 34 Frazier foe
 35 Pistol
 36 Talk a blue streak?
 37 Roundabout path
 39 Humorist
 40 — "Blue?"
 41 Garb
 45 Herbal brews
 48 Out-of-doors, as dining
 50 Rim
 51 Stead
 52 PC linking system

Answer to Previous Puzzle

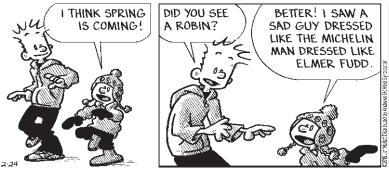
G	L	O	W	M	E	S	H	S	P	A
Y	O	G	A	E	C	H	O	P	E	C
M	A	R	V	E	L	A	T	N	O	E
A	R	Y	E	S	R	E	U	O	E	L
S	N	E	R	S	N	Q	I	N	N	N
R	E	Y	Y	E	Q	U	I	N	N	N
A	R	T	S	S	U	N	E	D	A	M
P	O	E	T	S	H	A	I	I	R	A
P	E	R	P	U	L	T	C	O	I	I
W	E	I	R	R	E	A	L	M	M	A
E	A	R	F	E	X	C	E	S	A	U
K	O	I	P	O	N	E	K	A	T	E
E	S	C	T	O	N	S	L	E	W	U

2-23

CRYPTOQUIP

N M G I G U R W A I G Q Q W T ' U
 U A D Q W N U N S W P A N K G Q A H A L G A
 H M A L W Q G R W T U ' I T D G P A ,
 N U L W G K G T I H P R H I W ?
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BIRDS WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO DELIVER INTEROFFICE MISSIVES TO ALL THE CO-WORKERS: MEMO-LARKS.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals B

Frazz



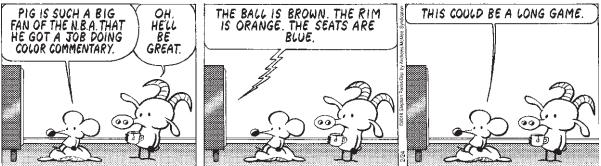
TRUDEAU

Dilbert



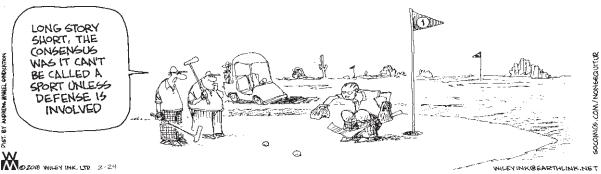
ADAMS

Pearls Before Swine



PETERS

Non Sequitur



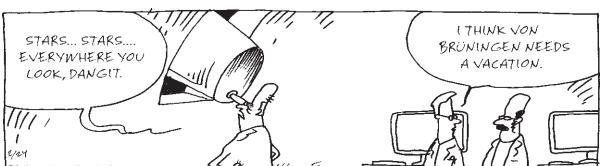
KETCHUM/DOUG GORDON/CON/DOUG GORDON

Candorville



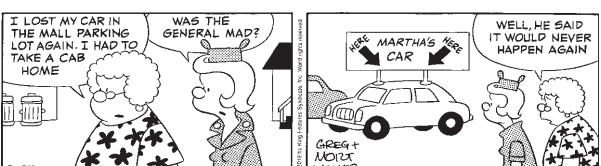
GOLDSTONE/DOUG GORDON/CON/DOUG GORDON

Carpe Diem



PETERS

Beetle Bailey



WALKER

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2-24

Bizarro

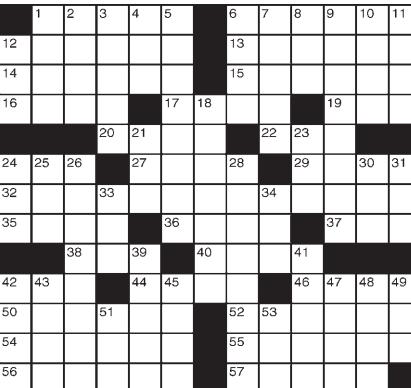


PIRARO

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2-24

Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

1 Sign after Virgo
6 George Washington —
12 Virgil epic
13 Indefinite interval
14 Stand up for
15 Raps
16 Starting
17 Nantes notion
19 Kreskin's claim
20 Bigfoot's cousin
22 German article
24 Map lines (Abbr.)
27 Thailand, once
29 Earth circler
32 Greeter's words
35 Cowardly Lion portrayer
36 Protuberance
37 Cry
38 Dalloway or Doubtfire
40 Baseball team
42 Carnival city
44 Commotion
46 Black, in verse
50 Unprincipled
52 Ring around the sun
54 Sand trap, for one
55 Dried grape
56 Aromas
57 Upright

DOWN

1 Sediment
2 Data
3 Powerfully built
4 — Tin Tin
5 Building wing
6 Birthday dessert
7 Bearded, as grain
8 Plato's P
9 Showy butterflies
10 BPOE members
11 Breathing (Abbr.)
12 Nabokov novel
18 Wedding ring sparkler
21 Ballpark fig.
23 911 responder

24 NBC weekend show
25 Spanish aunt
26 Chat
28 So-so
30 Odometer start
31 Gist
33 Mess up
34 Poetic dusk
39 Kick off
41 Haunting
42 Stadium cheers
43 Apple computer
45 Early automaker
47 Pear type
48 Getting the job done
49 A Bobbsey twin
51 Scooted
53 Crew tool

Answer to Previous Puzzle

L	E	E	Y	A	R	D	M	A	U	D
E	L	S	U	S	E	R	A	M	M	O
A	L	P	A	C	I	N	N	O	A	H
S	E	N	E	C	A	P	S	I		
S	H	O	O	S	M	B	A	E	R	A
C	O	M	P	B	A	Y	B	A	I	L
A	L	I	G	U	N	C	U	R	S	E
D	E	T	O	U	R	W	I	T		
A	M	I	A	T	T	R	I	R		
T	E	A	S	A	L	E	R	E	C	O
E	D	G	E	L	I	E	L	A	N	
D	U	O	S	S	I	R	S	A	S	

2-24

CRYPTOQUIP

L Q Z P W N R Q P M D J Y Z V V
C A D C V A L Q D Y D B O P F J Y P

O Z X A P M B A P O X D F Y N F Y J O A O ?

C F A Y Z J P N D B Z F M W A O Q A F O .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: If A BASKETBALLER'S STYLE IS IDENTICAL TO THAT OF THE LAKERS' BRYANT, IS HE A CARBON KOBE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals W

INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

Whenever They Fight and Wherever They Live

The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stripes as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stripes reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read in digital form, either online at stripes.com or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in



Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.

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★ 2014 Sigma Delta Chi Award – Feature Story Reporting (Daily Circulation 150,000)
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Death shapes life for teams that prepare bodies of fallen troops for final flight home"

★ 2014 VFW News Media Award – For outstanding contribution to a better understanding of our American way of life and its institutions and interests by honest and forthright reporting.

★ 2013 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Notable Narrative Winner
Recipient: Laura Rauch

★ 2013 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest – Notable Narrative Winner
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Soldiers Recount Attack"

★ 2013 National Headline Awards – Second Place: News Series
(Forever After: A Warrior Wounded; Family Challenged)

★ 2011 Military Photographer of the Year – Honorable Mention
Recipient: Joshua DeMotts

★ 2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award – Breaking News Photography
(Newspaper Circulation 100,001+ or Affiliated Website/National Magazine)
Recipient: Laura Rauch:
"For those I love I will sacrifice"

★ 2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism – Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

★ 2010 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Jon Rahiroff

★ 2010 National Headliner Awards – First Place: Public Service (Forcing Change) – Third Place: News Series
(Coming Home: The Men of Triple Deuce)

★ 2009 George Polk Awards in Journalism – George Polk Award for Military Reporting
Recipients: Charlie Reed, Leo Shane III and Kevin Baron

★ 2007 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (> 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Monte Morin

★ 2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipients: Monte Morin, Joe Giordano; Honorable mention: Nancy Montgomery
Photography: Fred Zimmerman

★ 2005 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipients: Steve Liever
Photography: Terry Boyd

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Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL

MILB — Signed relief pitcher RHP Forrest Whitley (Double-A Corpus Christi) 50 games without pay for a violation of baseball's minor league drug prevention and American League

BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Agreed to a minor league contract with RHP Carlos Torres.

NEW YORK YANKEES — Traded OF Jason Blash to the Los Angeles Dodgers for a player to be named or cash.

TEXAS RANGERS — Signed international old-timer compensation from Cincinnati for RHP Miguel Medrano.

AMERICAN LEAGUE — Agreed to terms with OF Rubby Rasmus on a minor league contract.

CLEVELAND INDIANS — Agreed to a minor league contract with RHP Carlos Torres.

NEW YORK YANKEES — Traded OF Jason Blash to the Los Angeles Dodgers for a player to be named or cash.

TEXAS RANGERS — Signed international old-timer compensation from Cincinnati for RHP Miguel Medrano.

MIAMI MARLINS — Agreed to terms with OF Cameron Maybin on a minor league contract.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Signed OF Michael Saunders to a minor league contract.

WASHINGTON NATIONALS — Agreed to terms with RHP Joaquin Benoit on a minor league contract. Placed RHP Joe Ross on the 60-day DL.

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association

NBA — Fired Dallas owner Mark Cuban \$600,000 for public statements detrimental to the league.

INDIANA PACERS — Signed G Trey McKinney James to a 10-day contract.

NEW YORK KNICKS — Signed OF Shaiquille Harrison from Northern Arizona (NBA) and signed him to a 10-day contract.

PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS — Signed G/F Brandon Rush to a 10-day contract.

LOS ANGELES SPURS — Signed F Tiffany Rieder.

FOOTBALL
National Football League

CAROLINA PANTHERS — Named Marty Hurney general manager.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS — Named Brad Bunting defensive line coach and Stephen Riddle offensive quality control coach.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League

ANAHEIM DUCKS — Recalled G Reto Berra from the AHL.

ARIZONA COYOTES — Acquired G Darcy Kuemper from the Los Angeles Kings for Tobias Rieder and Scott Wedgewood.

NEW YORK RANGERS — Assigned D Ryan McDonagh to the AHL.

WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Acquired D Jakub Jerabek from Montreal for a fifth-round draft pick.

COLLEGE
NC NORTHCAROLINA — Named Jenny Ruvalcaba Williams's assistant soccer coach.

PENNSYLVANIA — Named Brian Gill men's basketball coach.

TENNESSEE — Named Chris Weinkle running backs coach.

Feb. 23
1938 — Joe Louis knocks out Nathan Mann in the thirteenth to defend his world heavyweight title at Madison Square Garden in New York.

1960 — Shirley Babashoff wins the first gold medal for the United States in the Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley, California, winning the 1,500-meter speed skating.

1961 — Wilt Chamberlain becomes first player to score 25,000 points in the NBA.

1969 — Eric Heiden wins his fifth gold medal and shatters the world record by six seconds in the 1,000-meter speed skating at the Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, NY. His time is 14:28.13.

1970 — The New York Rangers score five goals in an 11-3 victory over the Hartford Whalers.

1971 — Michael Jordan sets an NBA rookie record with 25 assists to lead the SuperSonics over the Los Angeles Clippers.

1991 — North Carolina becomes the first team in NCAA basketball history to win 100 games with a 73-57 victory over Clemson.

2000 — Boston's Marty McSorley is suspended for 10 games (including 8 games for hitting Vancouver's Donald Brashear in the head with his stick on Feb. 1).

2010 — In Vancouver, British Columbia, Dutch skier Sven Kramer of Olympic speed skating fame with his coach Rikard Kemkers sends him the wrong way on a changeover during the 25 laps of the 10,000-meter race. Kramer had not lost a 10,000 in three years.

AP sport spotlight

Tennis

Delray Beach International

Wednesday

At Delray Beach Stadium & Tennis Center

Delray Beach, Fla.

PURSE: \$100,000 (250)

Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Singles

Double

First Round

Scott Lipsky, United States, and Divi Sharan, India, def Wesley Koehn, Netherlands, and Arten Sitak, New Zealand.

Nicholas Monroe, United States, and John-Patrick Smith (4), Australia, def Jen-Hsun Chen and Favrice Martin, France (3), 6-3, 10-8.

Eric Johnson, United States, def. Miles Raonic (9), Canada, 6-2, 6-4.

Riley Opelka, United States, def. Jack Sock (1), United States, 6-4, 7-6, 6-3.

Doubles

First Round

Naomi Osaka, Japan, def. Annet Kononenko, Netherlands, and Jana Cerezatti, United States, and Adel Shamsad, Canada, 3-6, 7-6 (3), 10-4.

Raven Klaasen, South Africa, and Michael Venus (1), New Zealand, and Daniel Mergera, Romania, and Daniel Nestor, Canada, 6-3, 6-3.

Tennis

Portugal

7-6 (11), 7-6 (2).

Quarterfinals

Rohan Bopanna, India, and Ewald Rothe, Germany, def. Jiri Vesely and Lukas Rosol, Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-2.

Oliver Marach and Matej Klizek, Slovakia, def. Daniel Nestor and Michael Venus, Canada, 6-3, 6-2.

Flavia Pennetta and Roberta Vinci, Italy, def. Daniel Nestor and Michael Venus, Canada, 6-3, 6-2.

Second Round

Karolina Pliskova (3), Czech Republic, and Carla Suarez Navarro, Spain, 6-2, 6-2.

Naomi Osaka, Japan, def. Annet Kononenko, Netherlands, and Jana Cerezatti, United States, and Adel Shamsad, Canada, 3-6, 7-6 (3), 10-4.

Eleni Daniilidou, Greece, and Jelena Ostapenko (4), Latvia, 6-1, 7-6 (2).

Sara Errani, Italy, 6-4, 6-2.

Elena Svitolina (1), Ukraine, def. Wang Qiang, China, 6-3, 6-2.

Caroline Garcia (5), France, def. Ekatrina Makarova, Russia, 6-4, 6-2.

Barbora Krejcikova, Czech Republic, def. Johanna Konta (7), Britain, 4-6, 7-6 (7), 6-2.

Garbine Muguruza (2), Spain, def. Cici Bellis, United States, 6-3, 7-5.

Doubles

First Round

Chao-Han Chang, Taiwan, and Yang Zhaoxuan, China, def. Andreja Klepac, Slovenia, and Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez, Spain, 6-2, 6-4.

Quarterfinals

Ekatrina Makarova and Elena Vesnina, Russia, def. Kristina Mladenovic and Kristina Mihiniy, Japan, 6-4, 6-1.

Hsieh Su-wei, Taiwan, and Peng Shuai, China, def. Peng Shuai and Shuai Zhang, United States, and Kvetoslava Peschke, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-0, 10-7.

Cheng-Ting Hsiao, Taiwan, and Yang Zhaoxuan, China, def. Lucie Safarova and Barbora Strycova (3), Czech Republic, 6, walkover.

Rio Open

Wednesday

At Jockey Club Brasileiro

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

PURSE: \$100,000 (150)

Surface: Clay-Outdoor

Singles

Second Round

Diego Schwartzman (6), Argentina, def. Federico Delbonis, Argentina, 6-2, 6-4.

Nicolas Jarry, Chile, def. Albert Ramos-Vinolas (4), Spain, 7-6, 6-3.

First Round

Nicola Mekic, Croatia, and Alexander Pejovic, Austria, def. Guillermo Cañas and Robert Farah (3), Colombia, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5), 7-6.

Jenny Murray, Britain, and Bruno Soares (2), Brazil, def. Fabiano de Paula and Thiago Monteiro, Brazil, 6-3, 6-1.

Doubles

First Round

Flavia Pennetta and Roberta Vinci, Italy, def. Kristina Mladenovic and Kristina Mihiniy, Japan, 6-4, 6-1.

Caroline Garcia (5), France, def. Peng Shuai and Shuai Zhang, China, 6-4, 6-1.

Yusuke Bamburo, Japan, def. Tatjana Maria, Germany, 6-1, 6-4.

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Second Round

Danielle Collins (7), United States, def. Kristina Mladenovic and Kristina Mihiniy, Japan, 6-4, 7-6 (7), 6-2.

Lucas Pouille, France, 6-3, 6-4.

Pierre-Hugues Herbert, France, 6-3, 7-6 (6), 6-4.

Benjamin Banneat, France, def. Robert Bautista Agut (8), Spain, 7-6 (2), 6-7 (5), 6-4.

First Round

Marcus Willis, Britain, and Dominic Inglot (4), Britain, def. Maximilian Marterer, Germany, and Joao Sousa, 6-2, 6-4.

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Doubles

First Round

COLLEGE BASKETBALL/AUTO RACING

Top 25 this week

Blue Raiders play with first ranking

By AARON BEARD
Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Middle Tennessee has upset power-conference teams in the past two NCAA Tournaments and reached 20 wins for the third straight season. Now the Blue Raiders have another milestone: their first appearance in the AP Top 25 poll.

Middle Tennessee checked in at No. 24 in Monday's latest poll and will play as a ranked team for the first time Saturday at home against UAB as part the week's national Top 25 schedule.

"The sustainability part is what you strive for," coach Kermit Davis said in an interview with The Associated Press. "I just think it's the culture of it. Since I've been here, you're just striving to kind of get your brand like a Gonzaga or a Butler or schools that just kind of do it every year."

The Blue Raiders (22-5, 14-1 Conference USA) are certainly doing that these days.

Two seasons ago, they won 25 games and pulled the biggest upset of the NCAA Tournament by beating Final Four favorite and second-seeded Michigan State in the opening round. They followed that by winning 31 games last year and beating fifth-seeded Minnesota in the first round in 2017.

Along the way, Middle Tennessee has gone 23-3 in road games over two seasons, including a 12-1 mark after Saturday's win at Louisiana Tech.

The Blue Raiders are led by Alabama graduate transfer Nick King, who started his career at Memphis. The 6-foot-7 forward is averaging 21.4 points and 8.4 rebounds.

Middle Tennessee is trying to maintain its hold on the Conference USA lead with Old Dominion and Western Kentucky sitting a game back in the loss

column. The Blue Raiders have three home games left, including March 1 against the Hilltoppers. Davis said he doesn't think that the ranking will be a distraction — "If we get beat, that's not going to be the reason why," he said — but it is something Davis said the Blue Raiders plan to savor with a few days off before playing again.

"It's great for our players, it's great for our fan base," Davis said. "You're trying to grow your fan base, so it is (important). We all understand that we've got a lot of work ahead of us and big games. But you better believe it, the Middle Tennessee faithful around the country will love seeing their name in the AP poll."

Virginia's march

Top-ranked Virginia (24-2, 13-1) can wrap up the Atlantic Coast Conference regular-season race this week. They lead fifth-ranked Duke by three games in the loss column and own the head-to-head tiebreaker from their win at Cameron Indoor Stadium on Jan. 27, and they clinched a share of the regular-season title and the No. 1 seed for the ACC Tournament in Brooklyn by beating Georgia Tech on Wednesday.

Now they travel to Pittsburgh on — 0-15 in the league — to try to claim the regular-season race outright Saturday.

Weekend tests

There's a top-10 matchup in the Big 12 this week with No. 8 Kansas visiting No. 6 Texas Tech on Saturday, with the Jayhawks seeking to avenge an 85-73 home loss to the Red Raiders on Jan. 2.

That's part of a test-filled weekend for some top-tier teams, with No. 2 Michigan State (at Wisconsin), No. 3 Villanova (at Creighton) and No. 6 Gonzaga (at BYU) all playing on the road.



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

Middle Tennessee head coach Kermit Davis has the Blue Raiders in the AP Top 25 for the first time in history. The Blue Raiders checked in at No. 24 in Monday's latest poll.



PHILIP M. EBENHACK/AP

Bubba Wallace, left, shoots a selfie with fans during practice for the Daytona 500. Wallace finished second in the race, edging Denny Hamlin at the finish line when the two raced door to door.

NASCAR goes to Atlanta with a Daytona hangover

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Austin Dillon is still celebrating his Daytona 500 victory and Bubba Wallace is relishing his sudden breakout as NASCAR's newest star.

Denny Hamlin? Well, he's in the middle of another feud, and it's only the second week of the season.

NASCAR moves from the Daytona 500 this weekend to Atlanta Motor Speedway with a bit of a hangover from the biggest party of its season.

Hamlin earned a call to the NASCAR hauler for a comment he made last week on the "Barstool Sports" podcast in which he claimed 70 percent of NASCAR drivers take the prescription drug Adderall to help with concentration.

Adderall on NASCAR's banned substance list without a doctor prescription.

Hamlin claimed it was a joke made on an irreverent podcast, but Wallace didn't let it go after nudging Hamlin for second place in the Daytona 500. The two raced door-to-door to the finish, and Hamlin has repeatedly said the contact cut his tire.

But after his historic second-place finish — Wallace was the first black driver in the Daytona 500 field since 1969 — he took a shot at Hamlin for the final lap racing that in Hamlin's mind went too far. "He might need to take some Adderall for that one," Wallace said on the Fox broadcast after he climbed from his car.

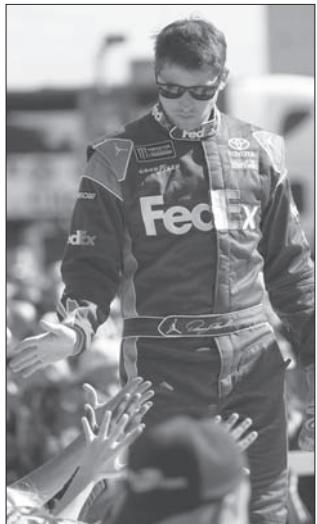
Told of the crack at his post-race news conference, Hamlin again maintained Wallace's contact had cut his tire. He didn't respond to the Adderall mention and exited the room.

Once outside the media center, he bumped into Wallace, and the two had a brief but heated exchange.

Public sentiment is on Wallace's side — few fans have forgiven Hamlin since he wrecked Chase Elliott at Martinsville last fall — and Hamlin angrily took to Twitter to tell his side of the story.

Hamlin late Tuesday night called his Twitter critics "idiots," and explained he had no beef about the ending of the race. His problem was the final question of his news conference, when he was asked for a response to Wallace's remark.

"I had no issue until not only did he place blame



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Denny Hamlin, above, claims contact he had with Bubba Watson at the end of the Daytona 500 cut his tire and cost him a second-place finish.

on me but then went on to make personal comments about myself. I left the media center and saw Bubba 30 secs later," Hamlin posted in a series of tweets.

"Anyone who wouldn't take offense to the stupid things that was said has absolutely no backbone. I have one," he concluded.

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC

ATHLETES OF THE YEAR: BASKETBALL

Quintin Metcalf, Humphreys

BY DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — It's a singular breed who can win a Far East tournament and Most Valuable Players honors in Division I one year, then transfer and do the same at a Division II school the next.

That somebody is Quintin Metcalf, the tallest player in either division the last two seasons. He helped Seoul American to the D-I title as a sophomore a year ago, transferred over the summer to Humphreys and did the same, only at the Division-II level, earning MVP honors in both.

But as talented as the 6-foot-8 center may be, Metcalf says winning a championship is not about one person, but all those on the roster contributing.

"I'm kind of getting all the attention for it, MVP, this guy's doing it all, but it was really the people of my team who helped me get there," Metcalf said.

Guys such as senior guard Brice Bulotovich, who led the Pacific with 9.6 assists per game, and junior Jalen Hill's 4.7 per game. "Without that, we don't win," Metcalf said. "It's a whole team effort. Most of the points I get are from the work they do."

As a result, he averaged 18.7 points per game on 62.7-percent shooting, 16 rebounds, 3.1 steals, 2.1 blocked shots and less than a turnover per game for a Blackhawks team that went 20-1 this season.

Humphreys captured the Korea Blue Division regular-season and tournament titles for the first time in school history and placed third in the combined Far East tournament following the first D-II title since Humphreys opened in 2013-14.

For that, Metcalf has been named Stars and Stripes Pacific's boys basketball Athlete of the Year for the second straight year.

All that was supposed to happen at Seoul American, where Metcalf was due to graduate in 2019, but his family moved to Humphreys, where he had to start all over.

"At the beginning, I was kind of sad, all the friends, the basketball," Metcalf said. "But when I got [to Humphreys], I made some new friends and I got used to the basketball system and how they rolled."

Seoul American coach Steve Boyd pre-

2017-18 All-Far East boys basketball team

Quintin Metcalf, Humphreys; Koki Wiley, American School in Japan; Davion Roberts, Nile C. Kinick; Montez Young Jr., Kadena; Renyck Robertson, Yokota.

ferred that Metcalf and his older brother, DeAndre (Class of 2017) stay in the paint and dominate inside.

"Coach Boyd is used to routine; he doesn't like it when routine is broken," Metcalf said. "He had it planned in his head what he wanted to have happen."

Humphreys coach Ron Merriwether gave Quintin more rein to roam the offensive zone, even take an occasional three-point shot; he hit 6-of-19 this season, including two in the first quarter of the Blackhawks' 68-39 Korea Blue tournament final win over Seoul Foreign.

"Coach Merriwether is a go-with-the-flow coach," Metcalf said. "Whatever happens in a game, he can adjust to it. When I got here, he was saying I could shoot and dribble. I didn't do it as much last year as I did this year, but I think I surprised [Boyd] when I hit a three."

With his combination of skills and newfound outside game, Merriwether says the sky is the limit for Metcalf, who for now is due to graduate from Humphreys in 2019.

"He may be the best yet to come out of here," Merriwether said. "He will get bigger, faster and maybe even taller. His GPA is great. He has great support from his family. Not to mention the influence he has on his teammates."

Humphreys would have liked to have finished undefeated. Metcalf said; the Blackhawks' only loss was 61-58 to American School in Japan in the combined Far East semifinals. "Our goal was to go undefeated ... but every team is going to [face] that upset [loss]," Metcalf said.

Still, finishing third "still felt good," he said. "There were other teams saying ... there was no competition (in Korea), but in the end, we were the only D-II team in the top four."

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Britney Bailey, Yokota

BY DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

2017-18 All-Far East girls basketball team

Britney Bailey, Yokota; Shanique Lucas, American School of Bangkok; Jamia Bailey, Yokota; Rhamsay Wyche, Kadena; Karen Anastas, Robert D. Edgren

Athlete of the Year for the second straight year.

With Jamia the sidelined, Britney, normally accustomed to taking passes inside, posting up and dominating inside the paint, would assume some of Jamia's tasks, such as bringing the ball upcourt, passing to a teammate who would then make an entry pass to Britney inside.

"I wasn't a second point guard, but my teammates needed help, so I wanted to help them with that," Bailey said. "I had to play point guard for a little bit just to get the ball rolling ... I had to be able to control my skills and know what I needed to do and when to do it."

She also spent time developing the skill level and confidence of teammates such as Jordyn Logue, a senior forward, and Emily Taynton, a sophomore guard, who became valuable cogs in the Panthers' wheel.

Yokota transformed itself into a more complete team, instead of just two Baileys and a cast of seven, Wrenn said. "When we finished, a couple of coaches at Far East said they noticed how we were able to balance out the team," Wrenn said.

Bailey will complete her career at Yokota in track and field hurdles. But she says she can walk away with the comfort that in her two team sports, volleyball and basketball, "I was able to be a part of a team that could get two Far Easts two years in a row," she said. "I didn't think I'd have this opportunity. It feels amazing."

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PHOTOS BY DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

HIGH SCHOOL

DODEA PACIFIC WRESTLER OF THE YEAR



Lucas Wirth, Kinnick

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Sometimes, one down moment in a wrestler's season can be enough to motivate them for the rest of his high school career.

Take Lucas Wirth and his double-elimination finals defeats in the 2017 Far East tournament last February 17. Then a Kinnick junior, the 122-pounder lost, 10-0 and 4-2, to his chief rival, St. Mary's Rio Lemkuil.

Immediately, a fire was lit inside Wirth.

"It was a revenge tour from the start, since the end of the last one," Red Devils coach Gary Wilson said.

As a 129-pounder, Wirth went undefeated, from the opening tournament at Matthew C. Perry on Nov. 17 to a pinfall victory over Lemkuil in the Far East dual-meet final Feb. 3.

Kinnick won all its events but the Kanto Plain finals on Jan. 20, capturing the banners in both the Far East dual-meet and individual-freestyle tournaments for the first time since the 2001 season.

For all those achievements, Wirth has been named Stars and Stripes Pacific's Athlete of the Year for wrestling. He beats out Hunter Lane, a Daegu senior who became just the second senior in Far East's 41-year history to be named the tournament's Outstanding Wrestler.

On the flight back to Japan from Osan last February, Wirth said he sat quietly in his seat, stewing over how losing to Lemkuil was the "worst feeling in the world."

He especially rued how he was denied two points late in the second final bout which could have given him the win. And it also ended any possibility he had of becoming a rare four-time Far East champion.

"It was a tough call," Wirth said, adding that he has looked at the video "over and over again."

"I feel I let the team down," Wirth said. "It came down to one placing. If I don't lose, then we win as a team and that would have changed everything."

All of that was what gave him the determination for 2017-18, "that I wasn't going to lose," he said. "It set me straight."

"Last year, he felt like things would naturally happen," Wilson said. "This year, he went out and got it."

His unbeaten run began that Nov. 17 evening before the home crowd, when the Red Devils edged the Titans 29-26. Wirth downed Lemkuil 6-2 in their 129-pound bout.

"I couldn't wait for that first dual meet, St. Mary's, at home," Wirth said.

Still, it was just one bout, and Wirth said he knew there would be more against the one guy who'd beaten him during his four years at Kinnick. He needed to do something, Wirth said, to stay a step ahead of Lemkuil.

Wirth says he approached Kinnick assistant Dan Joley, who told him he needed to change his style.

"Instead of coming straight up with him, go from the side, make sweeps and stuff, instead of trying to power everything," Wirth said. "I went for more finesse, coming in quicker instead of trying to muscle everything."

A change of training partners also helped, Wilson said. Wirth spent much time working against 135-pound champion Devonay Stanley. "He picked some stronger partners to partner up with," he said.

He also stopped being nervous every time he got on the mat with Lemkuil, Wirth said. "I was like, 'what's the point of being nervous?'" he said. "You've been doing this for so long. Just go out and wrestle."

But Wirth was not only in it for himself; as a team captain, he also worked with other wrestlers during practice to better their game, such as 101-pounder John Lanzilotta.

Lanzilotta went on to finish second in the individual and beat St. Mary's Jasjot Bedi 5-3 to lead off Kinnick's 30-28 Far East dual-meet banner-winning victory over the Titans.

Now that it's over, now that Wirth will no longer wear the red-and-white of Kinnick, he says the way it ended couldn't have gone better.

"I still feel like I'm on top of the world," he said. "It's very, very special."

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL B. KELLER/Stars and Stripes

Kaiserslautern's Marlon Robbins tries to go to the basket against Ramstein's Sincere Dudley, left, and Naser Eaves in a Division I game at the DODEA Europe championships in Wiesbaden, Germany, Thursday. Kaiserslautern beat Ramstein 35-33.

DODEA Europe basketball championships scoreboard

Boys

Thursday in Wiesbaden, Germany

Division I

Pool A

Wiesbaden 47, Alconbury 40

Naples 59, Lakehurst 46

Pool B

Vilseck 46, SHAPE 44

Kaiserslautern 52, Vicenza 27

Ramstein 59, Vilseck 42

Kaiserslautern 52, Ramstein 33

Vicenza 41, SHAPE 35

Friday's games

Pool A

Kaiserslautern vs. Stuttgart, 7 p.m.

Wiesbaden vs. Ramstein, 8:30 p.m.

Pool B

Aviano 45, AFNORTH 27

Black Forest Academy 70, American

Overseas School of Rome 42

Pool C

Marymount 35, Spangdahlem 26

Rota 55, Bahrain 42

Rota 36, Spangdahlem 20

Bahrain 40, Marymount 38

Rota vs. Aviano, 1 p.m.

Black Forest Academy vs. Marymount, 23 p.m.

Division III

(Round-robin)

Sigonella 48, Alconbury 38

Brussels 39, Ansbach 26

Hohenfels 19, Baumholder 31

Ansbach 31, Baumholder 30

Brussels 40, Hohenfels 33

Brussels 30, Ansbach 25

Hohenfels v. Baumholder, 8 a.m.

Alconbury v. Bahrain, 9 a.m.

Brussels v. Ansbach, 10 a.m.

Sigonella v. Ansbach, 11 a.m.

Brussels v. Hohenfels, 12 p.m.

Ansbach v. Alconbury, 1 p.m.

Hohenfels v. Baumholder, 9:15 a.m.

Alconbury v. Bahrain, 10:30 a.m.

Brussels v. Hohenfels, 11:45 a.m.

Sigonella v. Ansbach, 1 p.m.

Brussels v. Hohenfels, 2 p.m.

Ansbach v. Alconbury, 7:15 p.m.

Division II

(Round-robin)

BFA 45, Marymount 7

AOSR 40, Aviano 24

Pool B

Spangdahlem 33, Rota 20

Bahrain 40, Alconbury 24

AFNORTH 35, Rota 2

Friday's games

(Round-robin)

Spangdahlem vs. Marymount, 10 a.m.

BFA vs. Bahrain, 11:30 a.m.

Spangdahlem vs. Bahrain, 12:45 p.m.

Sigonella v. Bahrain, 1:45 p.m.

Spangdahlem vs. Bahrain, 3 p.m.

Brussels 33, Brussels 26

Division III

(Round-robin)

Ansbach 31, Baumholder 23

Brussels 36, Hohenfels 33

Sigonella 16, Alconbury 10

Hohenfels 23, Alconbury 25

Baumholder 23, Alconbury 11

Friday's games

(Round-robin)

Alconbury v. Bahrain, 7 a.m.

At Wiesbaden High School

Hohenfels v. Baumholder, 9:15 a.m.

Alconbury v. Bahrain, 10:30 a.m.

Brussels v. Hohenfels, 11:45 a.m.

Sigonella v. Hohenfels, 1 p.m.

Ansbach v. Hohenfels, 2 p.m.

Baumholder 23, Alconbury 11

Friday's games

(Round-robin)

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MLB

Cubs' Zobrist hungry for more

Aging 2B eager to take on changing role

BY JASON P. SKODA
Associated Press

MESA, Ariz. — Throughout 2017, Ben Zobrist felt the strain of the previous two years.

The lengthened seasons after two World Series runs, the much-discussed carry-over for a franchise that waited 108 years for a championship and a balky wrist took their toll.

The result was a career-low .232 batting average and only 12 home runs and 50 RBIs, quite a dip from the previous season when he wound up as World Series MVP for the Chicago Cubs. The year before that, helped the Kansas City Royals win the crown.

"I can tell you this, the hunger is back for this team and we're excited to get back at it and prove to the league that we're the best team again," he said.

Zobrist knows his role is changing a bit as he enters the season as manager Joe Maddon's plug-and-play piece as a super utility player.

He will be 37 in May and is surrounded in the clubhouse by young talent heading toward its prime. Zobrist will still get plenty

of playing time, even at first base, but knows his days of 150-plus games a year are behind him.

"I'm not going to play 158 games or whatever," said Zobrist, who was held out of Tuesday's live BP sessions as the Cubs bring him along slowly. "I'm going to have to manage and figure out how to play great for 130. Being healthy and playing 130 games of nine innings would be great."

"From their standpoint and from my standpoint, it's about managing my performance and my body physically. And making sure I can do all that and keep it at the highest level I can," he said.

Most importantly, he returns to spring training feeling great after dealing with a right wrist injury that kept him from swinging freely most of last season.

The switch-hitter batted only .179 from the right side, where he had been stronger most of his career.

Zobrist is ready to rebound and knows with the way Maddon uses his lineup he will still have a vital role and will stay sharp throughout the season.

"I'll be good with what we have to do," Zobrist said. "Because we've got a lot of great players,



Nick Wass/AP

At 36 years old, second baseman Ben Zobrist is out to show he still has something left for the Cubs. The super utility man struggled in a big way last season after playing on back-to-back World Series winners — with Kansas City in 2015 and the Cubs in 2016.

and there are going to be good players who are going to sit on the bench at times."

"But no one ever rests there. Joe uses everybody," he said.

Especially, if the question of who will be the leadoff hitter continues to be a main theme throughout the year, as it was in 2017 when the Cubs finished second in the NL in scoring.

"It's almost like having a closer," Maddon said. "If you don't have a legitimate closer, it's OK to work the ninth inning other ways. I'm very comfortable with

moving that around based on guys that get on base often. And when you can combine a guy that has a high on-base and then he hits homers, too, that's even more attractive."

Maddon has put his faith in Zobrist for years, dating back to their Tampa Bay days, and will continue to do so.

"Listen, you're always better off when Ben Zobrist is in your lineup," Maddon said. "He's a little older than he had been. But he's in great shape. I told him, Let's just see what it looks like.

Go out there and play, and we'll try to figure it out as the season begins to unwind."

"Because who knows? He might have an epiphany and turn back the clock a little bit — he looks that good," Maddon said.

"Sounds fine to Zobrist. 'I'm 36 now as a player,' he said. 'I'm just trying to win championships at this point. It's not really about what you are trying to accomplish as an individual. Everybody wants to have great seasons, but I told him, Wherever you need me, I'm ready,'" he said.

Rangers strive to be AL West force once again

Associated Press

SURPRISE, Ariz. — The Texas Rangers are favored for success after a down 2017.

After winning back-to-back AL West championships, the Rangers went from winning 97 games in 2016 to a 78-84 record last season and finishing 23 games behind the Houston Astros.

"Hungry dogs run faster," Rangers manager Jeff Banister said Tuesday, the first day of the club's full-squad workout. "That may be a T-shirt."

Pitchers, by design, did not throw batting practice for the initial day with position players on the field.

Shortstop Elvis Andrus was unable to make it through the first day, leaving early with back spasms. Left-hander Matt Moore, who had been slowed by a tender right knee, was cleared to participate in pitcher's fielding practice. Left-hander Martin Perez, who suffered a broken right arm in a December incident with a bull on his Venezuelan ranch, is improving.

"He's throwing only," assistant general manager Jayce Tingler said. "He's progressing, just more precautionary. He's right on pace."



'Hungry dogs run faster. That may be a T-shirt.'

Jeff Banister
Texas Rangers manager

Clockwise from top left, Rangers outfielder Nomar Mazara, infielder Joey Gallo, outfielder Delino DeShields, infielder Rougned Odor and pitcher Martin Perez pose for a selfie Wednesday at the Rangers spring training facility in Surprise, Ariz.

tion. We've shown that.

"When you go through some adverse times you can look at last year and think of different moments and how we responded to them. I think the excitement is there's a group of guys in there that can't want to respond to what they encountered last year," he said.

The new-look Rangers will have Joey Gallo starting at first base with Mike Napoli gone and Delino DeShields replacing Carlos Gomez in center.

"Joey Gallo, there's a lot of excitement there, just the power potential, but the ability to improve on the command of the strike zone and the athleticism he has on the field," Banister said.

Gallo hit 41 home runs last season, while playing mostly at third base with Adrian Beltre restricted to 94 games because of injuries. Gallo also struck out 196 times, which ranked second in the American League.

Ohtani.

"Outsiders expect us to not anything we judge ourselves on really," Banister said. "It's what our internal expectations are. We play well in that underdog posi-

DeShields played mostly left in 2017, but is shifting to center this year.

"We're going to get a really good look at who he is in center field," Banister said. "We know what he does for us offensively. Just look at the stats, the runs scored per game when he's in the game and the winning percentage."

Banister said Ryan Rua, Drew Robinson and Willie Calhoun, who was acquired from the Los Angeles Dodgers in the Yu Darvish trade, are the left field candidates.

The Rangers need a bounce back year from Rougned Odor, who hit a pitiful .204 last season. It was all or nothing for Odor, who had 30 home runs, but struck out 162 times. Odor also committed a major-league high 19 errors by a second baseman.

"Rougned Odor is primed and ready to get back to status of play he's accustomed to and improve on that," Banister said.

NBA/HOCKEY

Can Warriors be dominant again?

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

The Golden State Warriors have never lost more than 15 games in a season under Steve Kerr.

They could reach that total in the first night after the All-Star break.

The Warriors who returned Thursday night aren't the same ones who dominated the NBA for the last three seasons. The defending champions sputtered into their week off with four losses in their final eight games, falling into second place in the Western Conference behind Houston — ending a three-year run of taking the league's best record into the break.

At 44-14 and loaded with four All-Stars, the Warriors are still very good, but not as good they've been.

"This year we've had a pretty solid season, but feel that we can play a lot better," Stephen Curry said. "So that's what we're trying to do this next 20 games before another championship run."

Their performances against their first two opponents out of the break show how different things have been for these Warriors. The Los Angeles Clippers, who visit Golden State on Thursday, won in Oakland last month after losing the previous 12 meetings in the series.

And the Oklahoma City Thunder, Golden State's opponent Saturday in a nationally televised game, have defeated the Warriors by 17 and 20 points already this season. They can become the first team to beat Golden State three times in a season since San Antonio went 4-0 against the Warriors in 2013-14 — the season before Kerr's arrival.

Their spotty play thus far makes Curry appreciate their time at the top even more.

"We've kind of set a standard of excellence in the league," he said. "That's pretty cool to think about sustaining that high level of play for so long."

Some other things to watch after play resumed Thursday with six games:



STEVE DIAPOLA/AP

Golden State forward Kevin Durant, left, looks to pass against Portland's Al-Farouq Aminu in a game before the All-Star break. The Warriors are still very good, but not as good they've been.

Race to the bottom: While the NBA fined Dallas owner Mark Cuban \$600,000 on Wednesday for his public comments about tanking, the Mavericks have plenty of company near the bottom of the standings. Phoenix has lost seven straight to share the worst record in the league with Atlanta at 18-41, and six other teams, including the Mavs, have 20 or fewer victories. The team who finishes last has the best chance to win the draft lottery, though if it's Brooklyn (19-40), that makes a winner out of Cleveland, which has the Nets' pick that belonged to Boston after acquiring it in the Kyrie Irving trade.

Dominant Davis: Anthony Davis scored 44, 38 and 42 points in his last three games before the All-Star break, leading New Orleans to victories in all of them. He leads the league with 22 games of 30 points or more and the Pelicans might need him to keep it up, as they are just a half-game ahead of the Clippers for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference.

Men of mystery: Two of the NBA's strange absences could be cleared up after the break — or could last through the rest of the season. Spurs star Kawhi Leonard continues to rehabilitate a right thigh injury — the team lists his reason for not playing as "return from injury management" — after he was shut down after appearing in just nine games. Philadelphia guard Marquelle Fultz, the No. 1 draft pick, remains sidelined with a right shoulder injury after playing in just four games. Neither player has been ruled out for the season, though there's not much time left if they're going to come back.

Rising rookies: Utah's Donovan Mitchell, who won the Slam Dunk contest at the All-Star Game, and Ben Simmons of Philadelphia could be locked in a tight race for Rookie of the Year. Both have their teams on the rise, as the Jazz have won 11 straight games to pull within 1½ games of eighth place in the West, while the 76ers have won five in a row and are seventh in the East.



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

The coaching staff of Germany with Marco Sturm, center, celebrates after a video review determined that Germany scored during overtime of the quarterfinal game against Sweden. Six years removed from his last NHL game, Sturm has immersed himself in coaching and has Germany in the semifinals.

NHL scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Tampa Bay	50	20	17	8	103	215	161
Boston	50	37	13	8	123	191	142
Toronto	62	37	20	5	125	172	172
Florida	50	37	13	5	125	186	156
Detroit	59	24	26	9	57	157	177
Montreal	59	21	28	10	52	160	207
OTTAWA	59	21	28	10	52	160	207
Buffalo	60	17	32	11	45	143	198

Metropolitan Division

Central Division							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Washington	61	35	22	4	74	187	180
Philadelphia	60	31	21	8	70	181	183
New Jersey	60	31	21	8	70	181	183
Columbus	60	30	25	5	65	159	170
NY Islanders	61	29	26	10	64	159	190
N.Y. Rangers	61	29	26	10	64	159	190

Pacific Division

Central Division							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Vegas	60	40	20	4	84	209	163
San Jose	60	33	19	8	74	178	170
Montreal	60	33	22	5	73	179	159
Dallas	60	34	22	4	73	179	159
St. Louis	61	34	23	4	73	173	156
Colorado	59	32	23	4	68	184	177
Chicago	61	26	27	8	60	173	175

Western Conference

Central Division							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Nashville	59	36	14	9	81	185	154
Minnesota	59	35	14	10	81	185	154
Phoenix	60	34	22	4	75	179	159
Dallas	60	34	22	4	75	179	159
St. Louis	61	34	23	4	75	173	156
Colorado	59	32	23	4	68	184	177
Chicago	60	26	27	8	60	173	175

Pacific Division

Central Division							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Vegas	60	40	20	4	84	209	163
San Jose	60	33	19	8	74	178	170
Montreal	60	33	22	5	73	179	159
Los Angeles	60	33	22	5	73	179	159
Calgary	61	30	22	9	71	172	182
Edmonton	60	29	26	10	64	164	194
Arizona	60	29	31	4	52	164	197

Wednesday's games

Wednesday's games							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Chicago 3, Dallas 2, 5 OT							
Atlanta 3, Dallas 2, 5 OT							
Vegas 7, Calgary 3							
Los Angeles 7, Colorado 3							
Edmonton 7, Arizona 3							

Thursday's games

Thursday's games							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Minnesota 7, NY Rangers 3							
Pittsburgh 7, Carolina 3							
Washington 7, Florida 3							
Buffalo at Detroit							
NY Rangers at Montreal							
San Jose at Nashville							
Colorado at Arizona							
Dallas at Los Angeles							

Friday's games

Friday's games							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
Minnesota at New Jersey							
Washington at Toronto							
Florida at Philadelphia							
Colorado at Calgary							
NY Islanders at New Jersey							
Carolina at Detroit							
Wild at Minnesota							
Boston at Toronto							
Chicago at Columbus							
Edmonton at Tampa Bay							
Anaheim at Arizona							
Edmonton at Los Angeles							
St. Louis at Nashville							
Detroit at N.Y. Rangers							
San Jose at Minnesota							
Wild at Minnesota							
Vancouver at Arizona							

Sunday's games

Sunday's games							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
St. Louis at Nashville							
Edmonton at Arizona							
Wild at Minnesota							
Vancouver at Arizona							

Sunday's games

Sunday's games							
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP
St. Louis at Nashville							
Edmonton at Arizona							
Wild at Minnesota							
Vancouver at Arizona							

Sturm could parlay Olympic success into NHL position

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — Marco Sturm wants to coach in the NHL.

He's having quite the audition coaching Germany at the Olympics.

Sturm has the underdog Germans in the semifinals, where he faces heavily favored Canada on Friday. At just 39, Sturm is the biggest reason Germany has exceeded expectations at the Olympics. He said he is constantly improving along with his team.

"As a coach — and especially me, because I'm very young and (only) my third year coaching — I learned so much," Sturm said Thursday. "It only helps in tournaments and it always helps playing against top teams, also.... You learn sometimes from your mistakes and on the other side what do you do good and what you think helps the team to be successful."

After 15 NHL seasons as a player on six different teams, Sturm is now enjoying some success in coaching. His six years removed from his last NHL game but already looks like he has a bright future behind the bench.

"He's still really, really young," veteran Germany defenseman Christian Ehrhoff said. "He's only going to grow from all these experiences. I think one day, why not? Why should he not be a coach on the highest level?"

Sturm makes no secret of his interest in getting back to North America to coach. He's currently living in Germany and coaching the national team full-time but could parlay his current work into a gig as an assistant in the NHL.

"I want to learn each year," Sturm said. "It's a great opportunity for me with the German hockey, but when this is done, I think I'm trying and I'm looking forward to maybe a next challenge and that will be the States and I think that's my goal."

First, though, Sturm is tasked with continuing to play at a tournament where few expected Germany to advance this far. Germany didn't qualify for the Olympics in Sochi, and even Sturm didn't expect this.

"He installed a system that really fits the players well we have," Ehrhoff said. "He is one of the greatest figures of German hockey, so when he first came in, the respect level he has within the group, it's huge."

WINTER OLYMPICS



NATHAN DENETTE, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

The United States' Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson, right, scores the game-winning goal against Canada in the shootout of the women's gold medal game Thursday at the Winter Olympics in Gangneung, South Korea.

Women's hockey

Waiting 20 years

US claims first gold medal since 1998

By TERESA M. WALKER
Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — The Americans' gold medal drought is finally over. They needed the first shootout in an Olympic women's final to do it, too.

Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson scored a dazzling, triple-deko goal in the sixth round of a shootout thriller and Maddie Rooney stuffed the last two Canadians to wrap up a 3-2 victory over archrival Canada on Thursday.

The Americans piled over the boards, throwing gloves in the air before huddling and hugging on the ice — 20 years after the women's last gold medal in hockey and 38 years to the day after the men's famous "Miracle on Ice" victory over the Russians in group play at Lake Placid.

"I can't put it into words," defenseman Kacey Bellamy said. "This whole year is for everyone that came before us. This is for Julie Chu (former USA team captain) and for all our families at home, the schools that we went to, everyone supporting us."

Lamoureux-Davidson's shootout goal was the talk of the game. She feinted a wrist shot, then drew goalie Shannon Szabados out of the net by faking a backhand



JULIO CORTEZ/AP

Kendall Coyne, top, of the United States, is hoisted by her fiance, Los Angeles Chargers offensive lineman Michael Schofield, after the gold medal game.

and came back to slide the puck past Szabados' outstretched leg into the open net for the clinching score.

Gigi Marvin and Amanda Kessel also scored in the shootout, another nail-biter ending four years after Canada won its fourth-straight gold medal in Sochi after rallying to stun the Americans in overtime.

Monique Lamoureux-Morando tied it up with a breakaway with 6:21 left in regulation. Hilary Knight also had a goal and Rooney was spectacular, making 29 saves for the win. The 20-year-old goalie stopped the last two Canadian shooters in the shootout by Brianna Jenner and then Meghan Agosta on her second attempt.

It was sweet redemption for the 10 Americans who watched the Canadians snatch gold away in Sochi. Not only did the Americans end the Canadians' stranglehold on Olympic gold, they ended a skid of five straight against their rival coming into this game.

Marie-Philip Poulin and Haley Irwin scored goals for Canada. Agosta and Melodie Daoust scored in the shootout.

This was the eighth time these North American rivals had met in the Olympics and the fifth with gold on the line.

Men's hockey

Russia, Canada have edge

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — Informed Germany had upset top-seeded Sweden and would be Canada's semifinal opponent. Eric O'Dell's unfiltered reaction didn't last long.

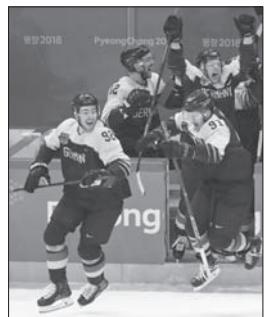
"Oh yeah? Perfe — it doesn't matter," he said, abruptly changing what he was going to say. "We're ready for any team, and every team from here going forward's going to be tough. It really didn't matter for us, but we'll be ready."

Many Canadians share O'Dell's initial surprise and happiness to face underdog Germany instead of Sweden, and the same can be said for Russians at least relieved to get the Czech Republic and not the faster United States. They have perhaps the best draws they could have imagined on a crash course to the gold-medal game at this Olympic tournament with no NHL players.

The two traditional hockey powerhouses have been clinical but not perfect in getting to this point and should have one final chance to get their games in order for what would be a tense final between two longtime rivals. But Canada overlooking Germany and the "Olympic Athletes from Russia" overlooking the Czech Republic would be a mistake.

"They belong in the semifinals," Canada captain Chris Kelly said of the Germans. "They're playing well. They've won two overtime games and last game they were in control. They were up 3-1 in the third period, so we need to be at our best against them. We need to stay in the moment and focus on them. We can't look too far ahead."

The two favorites came in expecting this, and after beating Norway in the quarterfinals, Russian captain Pavel Datsyuk said, "Our dream's still on." The Czech Republic stands in their way, and the Russians watched it beat the United States and the defensive-minded team has improved every game.



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

Germany celebrates beating Sweden in the quarterfinals of the men's hockey tournament Wednesday at the Winter Olympics in Gangneung, South Korea.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Scoreboard

Medals table

Through Feb. 22

86 medal events

Nation	G	S	B	Tot
Norway	13	7	12	32
Germany	9	7	5	21
United States	8	7	6	21
Netherlands	7	6	4	17
Austria	5	4	6	15
Russia	0	4	8	12
South Korea	4	3	2	9
Switzerland	3	5	3	11
Japan	2	0	0	2
Sweden	0	5	3	8
Spain	0	0	2	2
Italy	0	2	0	2
China	1	6	2	9
Great Britain	1	2	0	3
Finland	0	0	4	4
Belarus	2	1	0	3
Slovakia	1	2	0	3
Australia	0	2	1	3
Poland	1	0	0	1
New Zealand	0	0	2	2
Spain	0	0	2	2
Ukraine	1	0	0	1
Slovenia	0	1	0	1
Kazakhstan	0	0	1	1
Latvia	0	0	1	1
Liechtenstein	0	0	1	1

Thursday's medalists

ALPINE SKIING Men's Slalom

GOLD—André Myhrer, Sweden

SILVER—Ramon Zenhausern, Switzerland

BRONZE—Michael Matt, Austria

GOLD—Michelle Gisin, Switzerland

SILVER—Mikaela Shiffrin, United States

BRONZE—Wendy Holdener, Switzerland

BATHLION

Women's 4x6km Relay

GOLD—Belarus (Nadezhda Skaridno, Darya Domracheva, Iryna Kryukov, Dzmitra Alimkayeva)

SILVER—Sweden (Mona Brorsson, Anna Magnusson, Linnea Persson, Hanna Öberg)

BRONZE—France (Agnès Bescond, Marine Doin, Hélène Dufour, Aline Chevalier, Charlotte Brisez)

FREESTYLE SKIING Women's Aerials

GOLD—David Wise, United States

SILVER—Alex Ferreira, United States

BRONZE—Nico Porteous, New Zealand

ICE HOCKEY

Men's Team

GOLD—United States (Alex Rigsby, Amanda Kessel, Amanda Pelkey, Brianna Descheneaux, Kelli Stack, Kelli Stack, Emily Pfalzer, Gigi Marvin, Haley Skarupa, Hannah Brandt, Hilary Knight, Jocelyne Lamoureux, Meghan Duggan, Kali Flanagan, Kelly Pannek, Kendall Coyne, Lee Stecklein, Maddie Rooney, Meagan Mikkelson, Natalie Spooner, Laura Staloch, Marissa斗斗, Nicole Hensley, Sidney Morin)

SILVER—Canada (Anne-Renee Desbiens, Bailey Bram, Blayre Turnbull, Anna Jenner, Brigette Lacquette, Emily Clark, Geneviève Lacour, Jennifer Jones, Jennifer Wihenni, Jillian Saulnier, Jocelyne Larocque, Laura Fortino, Laura Staloch, Marissa斗斗, Meghan Duggan, Poulin, Meaghan Mikkelson, Meghan Agosta, Melodie Daoust, Natalie Spooner, Natalie Spooner, Natalie Stastna, Sarah Nurse, Shannon Szabados)

BRONZE—Finland (Annina Peltonen, Eila Viitala, Jarmo Lehtonen, Jarmo Lehtonen, Tuomas Puupponen, Iisa Rahonen, Jenni Hirvikoski, Linda Valimaki, Miekan Raisanen, Michelle Ranta, Riitta-Liisa Ranta, Riitta-Liisa Ranta, Jaisuosa, Noora Ranta, Noora Tulttu, Petri Nieminen, Riikka Vallia, Ronja Savolainen, Sanna Viitala, Sanna Viitala, Sanna Viitala, Sakala, Sanna Sakkinen, Susanna Tapani, Tanja Niskanen, Venla Tapani)

NON-OLYMPIC

Men's Team

GOLD—Germany (Eric Frenzel, Johannes Rydzek, Fabian Riessle, Vinzenz Geiger)

SILVER—Norway (Jan Schmid, Joergen Grabski, Espen Andersen, Jarl Magnus Riiber)

BRONZE—Austria (Wilhelm Denifl, Bernhard Gruber, Lukas Klapfer, Mario Seidl)

SHORT TRACK SPEEDSKATING Men's 500

GOLD—Wu Dajing, China

SILVER—Lim Hyojun, South Korea

BRONZE—Suzanna Schulting, Netherlands

SILVER—Mikeeau, Luke (Canada)

BRONZE—Men's 500 Relay

GOLD—Hungary (Viktor Knoch, Shaolin Sandor Liu, Shaogang Liu, Csaba Burjan)

SILVER—Chen Yuxin, Wu Dajing, Han Tianyu, Chen Yuxin, Xu Mengtao

BRONZE—Canada (Charles Hamelin, Pascal Dion, Samuel Girard, Charles Cournoyer)

SNOWBOARD

Big Air Women

GOLD—Andrea Rothfuss, Austria

SILVER—Jamie Anderson, United States

BRONZE—Zoi Sadowski Synnott, New Zealand

Thursday's results

ALPINE SKIING

Men's Slalom

Final results or

(Run 1: Run 2 in parentheses)

1. Andre Myhrer, Sweden (2, 47.93); 8,

51.26. 2. Ramon Zenhausern, Switzerland (9,

48.66; 2, 50.67), 1.39.33.

3. Michael Matt, Austria (12, 49.00; 1,

50.66), 1.39.66.

4. Clement Noel, France (7, 48.58; 10,

51.12), 1.39.72.

5. Alexis Pinturault, France (6, 48.54;

11, 51.18), 1.39.72.

6. Sébastien Jeandet, France (3,

48.34; 14, 51.41), 1.39.72.

7. Kristoffer Jacobsen, Sweden (10,

48.50; 11, 51.12), 1.39.72.

8. Daniel Yule, Switzerland (11, 48.88;

13, 51.24), 1.40.12.

9. Daniel Yule, Switzerland (11, 48.88;

13, 51.24), 1.40.12.

10. United States (John Robert Celski,

John-Henry Krueger, Thomas Hong, Aaron

Burton), 1.40.12.

11. Kazakhstani (Nurbergen Zhumagaziyev,

Denis Nikishin, Yerkebulan Shumakhan)

12. Japan (Ryosuke Sakazume, Kazuki Yoshinaga, Hiroki Yokoyama, Keita Watanabe), 1.40.35.

13. Poland (Adam Cieślak, Paweł Słowiak, Szczęsny Kupczak, Wojciech Maruszak), 1.40.37; 20, 9, 48.28; 51, 24.8.

SHORT TRACK SPEEDSKATING

Men's 500m

Final results or

(Run 1: Run 2 in parentheses)

1. Wu Dajing, China (1, 40.07; Q).

2. Samuel Girard, Canada (1, 40.15; Q).

3. Shaolin Sandor Liu, Hungary (1, 40.13; Q).

4. Daan Breeuwema, Netherlands (40.775;

5. Abzal Azhigitov, Kazakhstan (40.835).

6. Lim Hyojun, South Korea (40.132).

7. Lim Hyojun, South Korea (40.132).

8. Ryosuke Sakazume, Japan (40.434).

9. Ryosuke Sakazume, Japan (40.434).

10. United States (John Robert Celski,

John-Henry Krueger, Thomas Hong, Aaron

Burton), 40.434.

11. Kazakhstani (Nurbergen Zhumagaziyev,

Denis Nikishin, Yerkebulan Shumakhan)

12. Japan (Ryosuke Sakazume, Kazuki Yoshinaga, Hiroki Yokoyama, Keita Watanabe), 7.302.554.

13. Poland (Adam Cieślak, Paweł Słowiak, Szczęsny Kupczak, Wojciech Maruszak), 6.31.971.

14. China (Wu Dajing, Han Tianyu, Chen Yuxin, Wu Dajing), 6.03.035.

15. South Korea (Charles Hamelin, Pascal Dion, Samuel Girard, Charles Cournoyer), 6.32.118.

16. Hungary (Viktor Knoch, Shaolin Sandor Liu, Shaogang Liu, Csaba Burjan), 6.31.971.

17. China (Wu Dajing, Han Tianyu, Chen Yuxin, Wu Dajing), 6.19.156 (Q).

18. South Korea (Kim Yoong, Seo Yira), 6.42.118.

19. Germany (Merrillie Frenzel, Alice Flock, Merrilee Frenzel, Alice Flock), 6.42.118.

20. Norway (Sven Stålberg), 6.42.118.

21. South Korea (Kim Yoong, Seo Yira), 6.42.118.

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WINTER OLYMPICS

Wise choices pay off with gold in halfpipe

American repeats with bold third run in freestyle skiing

BY EDDIE PELLS

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — They give their bodies for this sport. Sometimes little pieces of their hearts and souls, too.

Maybe that's why David Wise decided there was nothing left to lose. Thursday when he stood atop a halfpipe that had sent one third of the 12 riders limping off with injuries, facing an all-or-nothing run after his ski bindings had failed him in his two previous trips down.

"We cranked my bindings up as high as they would go," Wise said. "We're like, 'You know what, my leg's coming off before the skis do.'"

The skis stayed on.

Wise put down the most difficult, technically precise run ever seen in the sport of halfpipe skiing, scoring a 97.2. He edged out his Olympic roommate and fellow American, Alex Ferreira, to win his second straight Olympic gold medal. He and Ferreira gave the United States its fifth and sixth medals on the halfpipe — producing a glimmer of good news for a U.S. team that has struggled at these Games.

In Seoul a few weeks ago, Wise and Ferreira huddled up and decided to get matching tattoos of the logo for the Pyeongchang Games on their arms. They were fitting tributes to all the work they put in and the suffering they endured on the road to South Korea.

"I certainly felt like I needed to do something epic to commemorate this journey, because it's been a really hard struggle the last couple years," Wise said. "I've been through a lot, and making the team for me was a lifetime accomplishment. Freeski-

ing won."

Four years ago in Sochi, Wise won but freeskating did not.

A poorly made halfpipe was made worse by wet, sloppy snow that fell on the night of the contest.

As the gold medalist and leader of his sport, Wise set out on a plan to make sure that wouldn't happen again. His goal was to become the first halfpipe freeskier to put down double corks — two head-over-heels flips — in all four directions on the same run: forward spinning right; forward spinning left; backward spinning right; backward spinning left.

He did it last month at the Winter X Games, then again in his final run of the Olympics.

He made it look effortless, but it isn't.

Spinning in an unnatural direction in the halfpipe, as U.S. coach Mike Jankowski put it, "is like throwing a baseball with your left hand if you're right-handed."

Or, in the words of Jonny Moseley, the moguls gold medalist who is the godfather of progression in freestyle skiing: "It's like learning two sports."

It's a lot to handle, even when other parts of life aren't getting in the way.

While Wise was training for those tricks, his father-in-law died. His sister, Christy, lost her right leg when a high-and-run boater sideswiped her. Wise endured concussions that left him wobbly and on the sidelines for months. He hurt his back so badly, he could barely turn around.

"We're defined as warriors," Wise said. "We ski the halfpipe. Halfpipe is definitely the most dangerous version of freeskiing, by a fair bit."

Ferreira went through his own version of



LEE JIN-MAN/AP

American David Wise celebrates after winning the men's halfpipe skiing final at Phoenix Snow Park on Thursday in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

heartbreak.

He barely missed the Olympic team last time, and though his list of injuries isn't as extreme — he broke his collarbone to start this season — he has watched his good friends in the sport get ravaged over the past four years, both on the halfpipe and off.

Most notably, his buddy Torin Yater-Wallace came down with an illness that landed him in the hospital and almost took his life.

On Thursday, Yater-Wallace was on the last jump of what could've been a medal-winning run when he crashed hard, and he walked gingerly off the halfpipe.

"I would not be where I am today without Torin Yater-Wallace," Ferreira said. "He's one of my best friends. I respect him, bar none, over anybody."

Yater-Wallace wasn't the only one to get hurt on a day in which Ferreira and Wise set the stakes with runs that would've won pretty much every halfpipe contest in history to this point.

France's Thomas Krief and Kevin Rolland, the 2014 silver medalist, each took hard falls and limped off under their own power but didn't complete the contest. New

Zealand's Byron Wells hurt his leg in training and never made the starting line.

Wise wrecked, too. He could've blamed his bindings for his first two crashes, but instead acknowledged he didn't land the jumps perfectly, which could have played a factor in the skis snapping out.

But they shouldn't snap out.

Wise normally sets his bindings on 14 — cemented in tight enough to shred a knee if they get torqued up in a crash.

On the last run, he cranked the settings to 18 — as high as they would go.

"I dropped in and I knew, first of all, that I had to make it happen," Wise said. "But I also knew that I could."

He did.

Given the risk he took and the price he paid, it's hard to imagine a more fitting champion.

"He's had this run in mind for several years," Jankowski said. "It took every bit of what he had — tons of falls and crashes and knocks along the way — but he's been visualizing this moment. And he's been visualizing doing it when it's all on the line, for years."

Austria's Gasser dazzles on final Big Air run

BY WILL GRAVES

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — Anna Gasser grew up wanting to be a gymnast, making it all the way to the Austrian national team before life took her in another direction. She didn't even start snowboarding until she was 18, drawn not by the lure of the Olympics but of simply challenging herself to push higher, go farther and become more than just some gymnast who gave snowboarding a shot.

Over the last eight years, Gasser has become far more than that.

And she's got the gold medal to prove it.

Gasser stomped a "cab double 10" — basically, two flips and three full rotations — in her final jump to slip past American star Jamie Anderson to claim the Olympic debut of women's Big Air. Gasser's score of 96 was the highest of the day and boosted her two-jump total to 185.00, providing a measure of redemption after a disappointing 15th-place



MATTHIAS SCHRADER/AP
Austria's Anna Gasser scored a 96 on her third run to win gold in the women's Big Air final on Thursday.

finish during the wind-marred slopestyle final last week.

"After slopestyle I think everyone needed this today," Gasser said. "Everyone needed to show their best tricks and today was one of the highest levels in girls' snowboarding I've ever seen."

One that pushed Gasser to the limit.

Gasser threw down a 1080

and a cab 900 to lead through two jumps but overshot the landing a bit while trying to nail a cab 10 on her third. That left an opening that Gasser, who earned the right to go last after topping qualifying on Tuesday, sprinted through.

Not that it bothered Anderson, whose silver made her the third snowboarder with three Olympic medals, joining Americans Shaun White and Kelly Clark.

"I was hoping she was going to land it for her because she's been charging and charging and just doing great for the last few years," said Anderson, who will leave South Korea with two medals after claiming gold in slopestyle. "It's so nice to see her put it down when it counts."

Standing atop the course getting ready to drop in, Gasser didn't feel any pressure. Already assured of at least silver, she followed one of her sport's unwritten rules: Never settle.

"My mind was 'I can only win here if I land, I can change the color of this medal,'" Gasser said. "I decided to do a trick I wasn't 100 percent sure it would work

but a trick I really wanted to show and that's what mattered to me the most."

In snowboarding, it's the spectacle and not the medals that truly matter. Which is why Gasser was particularly annoyed following the slopestyle competition. She openly wondered why officials allowed the event to go on even though high winds had forced the cancellation of other outdoor competitions scheduled elsewhere in Pyeongchang. Anderson survived the blustery conditions to claim gold on a day when only nine of the 50 runs were completed cleanly.

Officials scrambled to make sure it wouldn't happen again in Big Air. They moved the finals from Friday to Thursday amid concerns over another possible windstorm, and Anderson and Gasser responded by putting on a compelling duel at sun-splashed and mostly calm Alpensia Ski Jump Centre.

Big Air requires riders to sprint down a 50-meter ramp before vaulting high into the sky, flipping and twisting their way to the landing ramp, traveling as much style skiing halfpipe.

as 100 feet while flying end-over-end. All riders get three attempts, with the two highest scores counting toward their total.

Anderson spent the morning sipping tea and dancing to calm her nerves. She certainly looked relaxed, sending a message with her first jump, a near-flawless frontside 1080. The judges rewarded her with a 9.0. She backed it up with an 87.25. It ultimately wasn't good enough for gold. It hardly mattered to Anderson.

"All the girls are so gangster," Anderson said. "Literally any girl in that final could have won a medal today, it was just a matter of mind power."

Zoi Sadowski-Synott's total of 157.50 gave New Zealand its first Winter Olympic medal of any variety since Annelise Coberger earned silver in slalom at the Albertville Games in 1992. It was also the start of a big day for her homeland. Shortly after Sadowski-Synott joined Gasser and Anderson on the podium, New Zealand freestyle skier Nico Porteous grabbed bronze in the free-style skiing halfpipe.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Russian skaters poised for battle

By BARRY WILNER
AND JAMES ELLINGWORTH
Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — A true figure skating rivalry requires surpassing skills, intriguing back stories, and significant rewards on the line. Throw in a friendship, and Russians Evgenia Medvedeva and Alina Zagitova hit all the marks — just as they do on the ice.

The teenagers stood 1-2 after the women's short program at the Pyeongchang Olympics. Barring a collapse by one of them, something that would be tantamount to the New England Patriots going winless, they will finish with gold and silver after Friday's free skate.

Indeed, this could be a skating showdown for the ages, better even than the Battle of the Brits in 1988, or Lipinski-Kwan in 1998. Or the ice-melting classic in the free dance earlier this week.

Don't expect the 15-year-old Zagitova or the 18-year-old Medvedeva to back off an inch.

"We are friends first and rivals second, because you have to have competitiveness in sport," says Zagitova, who has called Medvedeva an inspiration for her career. So much of an inspiration, apparently, that Zagitova handed "Zhanya" her first defeat in two years at the European Championships.

"Zhanya and I are friends, there's no ill-feeling there, but there is a competitiveness in our training sessions which spurs us on."

In Thursday's practice session, Zagitova did more jumps than the other four skaters on the ice combined. At one point, just fooling around perhaps, she nailed a triple lutz-triple loop-triple loop-triple loop triple series. Nonstop.

Medvedeva wasn't quite so energetic — or over-the-top flashy. Then again, she has some catching up to do.

"We have a real human relationship, we talk a lot, and we spend almost the whole day together," she says. "I see how much she works and it makes me want to work harder."

Working hard might be Zagitova's forte now, but a few years

ago she nearly was thrown out of her training group by coach Eteri Tutberidze, who also works with Medvedeva.

The daughter of a hockey coach in Izhevsk, a Russian city best known for its weapons industry, Zagitova was 11 when Adelina Sotnikova won Russia's first ever women's gold at the Sochi Games in 2014. Later that year, she joined up with Tutberidze, but things didn't go well initially.

"I was very disappointed and I cried and I was going to travel home. I spent three or four days exercising on the ice and really understood how much I love figure skating. But it seemed too late to change anything," Zagitova said.

"We went to Eteri Georgievna to say that we were going back to Izhevsk and I'm going to quit figure skating and Eteri Georgievna told me, 'Let's try it one more time,' and I was so, so happy, really butterflies in my stomach. If that moment hadn't happened, then nothing else would have happened. I wouldn't be here at the Olympics."

Zagitova has also had to deal with a broken arm and foot she sustained in separate accidents three years ago. And, as one of the younger athletes in Tutberidze's group, she was once required to skate in a costume that Medvedeva had rejected as uncomfortable.

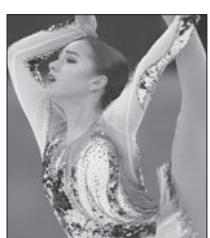
Medvedeva is more outgoing. Then again, she's 3 years older than Zagitova.

Medvedeva enjoys making videos of herself dancing to South Korean pop band Exo during her free time off.

She was nearly unbeatable in the previous two seasons, winning two world titles and pushing aside more established skaters such as Sotnikova and 2015 world champion Elizaveta Tuktamysheva, neither of whom came close to making the 2018 Olympic team.

Now Medvedeva risks being pushed aside by a younger Russian talent. And a friend.

"It just forces you to be stronger and when you see the younger skater who's doing more difficult, you're just feeling inside so strange because you're older and you must be stronger than them."



PHOTOS BY BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

Russians Evgenia Medvedeva, left, and Alina Zagitova are poised for an epic showdown in the women's freestyle on Friday.



NATALIA PISARENKO/AP

United States skip John Shuster, center, watches teammates John Landsteiner, left, and Matt Hamilton sweep the ice during a men's semifinal curling match against Canada on Thursday in Gangneung, South Korea. The Americans won 5-3 to earn a spot in the gold medal game against Sweden.

US curlers to play for gold

Men upset three-time champ Canada, earn spot in final vs. Sweden

By KRISTEN GELINEAU
Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — John Shuster and his U.S. team will play for a gold medal against Sweden after a 5-3 semifinal upset over Canada, a country that has struggled at the Pyeongchang Olympics despite dominating the world of curling for years.

The U.S. victory Thursday was a remarkable comeback story for a team which had never beaten Canada at the Olympics and hadn't made the podium since the 2006 Turin Games, when they won a bronze medal.

Just as remarkable was the loss for Canada, which has won the gold in men's curling at the last three Winter Olympics. The Canadian women's team, meanwhile, didn't even make the semifinals, despite being the defending world champions.

Shuster's victory follows a particularly rocky Olympic path. After winning the bronze in Turin, he was benched at the 2010 Vancouver Games in the middle of the tournament because his performance was so poor. In Sochi, Shuster's team finished in ninth place.

"It's a pretty good story. This is just another step," Shuster said. "I just decided that 50 years from now, maybe I'm long gone, when my kids are showing my grandkids video from the Olym-

pics, I don't want all my videos to be me failing."

The turning point in the semifinal game came in the eighth end. The teams were tied 2-2, and Canada had a distinct advantage known as the hammer, the right to throw the final rock of the end. But Kevin Koe, the team's "skip" or captain, threw the stone too light and it came up short of the target known as the house. The U.S. had two rocks in the target, giving them a two-point steal and putting them ahead 4-2.

In the next end, Canada blew its chance to score two points with its final rock, when Koe threw the stone a bit too hard and it skittered out of the house. The Canadians had to settle for one point, bringing the score to 4-3.

In the final end, Shuster threw the last rock, which knocked the lone Canadian stone out of the center of the house, adding one point to their score and sealing their win.

An elated Shuster pumped his fist in victory and the Americans whooped with joy. Vice-skip Tyler George ran up and down the arena holding up his index finger in a symbol of No. 1 as the crowd chanted, "USA! USA!"

Matt Hamilton said he planned to celebrate by going back to the athletes' village and ordering a McFlurry.

"The U.S. has been waiting for something like this and needing a

sort of spark," he said.

Kelsey Landsteiner, whose husband John Landsteiner is on the team, burst into tears after the win. She said the men had been determined to show the world that they were worthy of the gold.

"They wanted to prove to everybody that they could do it as well and really just bring it back for America," she said. "We need to prove our curling game is just as high and just as good as the Canadians, and I think we've proved that."

The Canadians will play for a bronze medal against Switzerland, which fell 9-3 to the Swedes in another semifinal match.

Swedish lead Christoffer Sundgren was talking to reporters after the victory when coach Peja Lindholm came up and kissed him on the cheek. That was about the only celebrating the team did after ensuring they could finish no worse than second.

"We're here for the gold, that's for sure," said Sundgren, whose team finished first in the round robin.

The Americans acknowledged they have another huge challenge on their hands against the Swedes.

"They're a fantastic curling team," Shuster said. "We're going to have some fun and put on a show, and may the best team win."

WINTER OLYMPICS

Speedskating abandons traditional start

For one event, racers will compete together

BY RAF CASERT
Associated Press

HEERENVEEN, Netherlands — The mass start is everything traditional Olympic long-track speedskating is not.

There are spills, pushes, elbows, evil eyes and worse over 16 laps as two dozen skaters vie in a pack for one gold medal. There is teamwork, strategy and often one nail-biting sprint to the finish line.

"That is why it is so exciting," said reigning world champion Joey Mantia, already relishing the thought of lining up for the final in the new event. So is just about everybody else.

Traditionalists in countries like Norway and the Netherlands love speedskating with its endless time trials between two racers, the subtleties of lap time variations and long waits to see which times actually survives for gold.

But as the 21st century burbled in with its in-your-face Olympic additions like snowboarding and jazzed-up forms of skiing like skicross and slopestyle, speedskating could not stay behind.

It needed a serious dose of cool, the complaints of boring races and predictable winners mounting at every Olympics. Critics said 10,000-meter races taking 13-plus minutes between two racers only to be followed by more of the same for the best time of a session was just too much.

So now, you get a pack of racers, let them rev up, race for seven to eight minutes, and get first to the line.

"This will get people looking at long-track and say 'OK this is a little bit like Formula One,'" Mantia said during an interview at the Thialf oval in northern Netherlands. "It's pretty simple; you have instant gratification in terms of who is across the line first, second, third is gold, silver, bronze. That's it."

"There is no waiting for 25, 30 minutes to see who else is going to do the time trial and how it is going to unfold," he said.

And for all the comparisons to Roller-



Competitors line up for the men's mass start race during the U.S. Olympic long-track speedskating trials on Jan. 7 in Milwaukee.

ball, the ultra-violent 1975 sci-fi movie actually set in 2018, there will be no James Caan skating past bodies.

Sometimes, the race can be lulled into a tactical stalemate where skaters weave slowly across the ice before suddenly one racer bursts free on an attempted getaway.

With all skaters chasing in a pack it can get hairy, said 2016 world champion Ivanie Blondin of Canada.

She explained the attitude going round the oval. "There's girls grabbing you," she said. "When they are passing you on the outside, or on the inside, they will grab your hips and push them back. And they

don't get disqualified for that," she said. "And neither do I, so in a way it is kind of a free-for-all."

In short, she said, "there kinda are no rules."

How bad is it really? "If you, like, body check someone or if you do make someone fall, then you can get disqualified. But I have yet to see someone get disqualified for a fall."

And when there are hot rivalries in time trial races, there is little to see, since they race in different lanes all the time. Here it's different.

Blondin is known not to get along with Irene Schouten of the Netherlands. "We

don't really see eye to eye, so it makes things a little bit more interesting."

And where the other events are carefully honed disciplines with a minimum of interference in their specific lanes, massive upsets are rare.

That's not the case, though, in mass starts, which is back for the first time since the 1932 Games in Lake Placid.

The World Cup standings offer some guidance, with Lee Seung-hoon of South Korea winning two of three races and Francesca Lollobrigida of Italy leading the women's standings.

But what counts a great deal in such races is self-confidence verging on cockiness.

US four-man team optimistic

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — If there was a positive from the two-man bobsled competition at the Olympics, it's this: They now know what not to do.

Knowing what to do is still a work in progress.

So the U.S. men returned to the ice Wednesday for the first day of official training for the four-man competition — desperate to figure out a course that has largely befuddled them to this point. Four-man is the final sliding event in Pyeongchang, with two runs on Saturday and two more before the cauldron gets extinguished on Sunday.

"A really good day," U.S. pilot Codie Bascue said. "We had some things we wanted to fix from two-man because two-man didn't go as well as planned. But we had

two really solid runs today. That'll give us some confidence for the rest of the week."

Any confidence boost would be helpful. The U.S. placed 14th, 21st and 25th in the two-man competition.

"Two-man, I can't do anything about it now," U.S. pilot Sgt. Nick Cunningham said. "I have to put that behind me, but I can definitely take what I learned and apply it to four-man. I have no runs here. I don't really know what it feels like here. There are 15, 20 runs that I was offered (last fall) that I wasn't sent to do and it's showing right now."

Cunningham has taken 12 official trips down this track since arriving for the Olympics — six in two-man training, four more in the two-man race, and two in his four-man sled. He'll get four more before the race starts this weekend.

That's not a lot of time, so he

knows he's got to be a fast learner. The thing he's been working on most is figuring out Curve 2, which he struggled with in the opening run of two-man and went plummeting down the standings.

"My Olympics were over in Curve 2," Cunningham said of the two-man race. "It's over. You're sliding the whole way down the track saying: 'It's over. What do I do now?'

That answer is simple: Go back to work.

Sgt. Justin Olsen was the top U.S. pilot in two-man, and he said the addition of some well-rested pushers for the four-man mix will be a significant boost. Carlo Valdes, Sgt. 1st Class Nate Weber and Capt. Chris Fogt all were held out of the two-man event, so they're as fresh as can be to join Olsen for four-man.

"I would say they've felt a little caged up, but today they got out of the cage," Olsen said.



Driver Codie Bascue, front, Steven Langton, left, Samuel McGuffie, center, and Evan Weinstock of the United States start a training run for the four-man bobsled competition at the Winter Olympics.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Shiffrin gets silver, Vonn DNF combined

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

JEONGSEON, South Korea — Mikaela Shiffrin already was assured of earning her third career medal, each in a different event, when Lindsey Vonn prepared to propel herself out of the starting gate as the final starter in the final race of her Olympic career.

This slalom portion of the two-leg Alpine combined would be the first — and only — time Vonn, 33, and U.S. teammate Shiffrin, 22, would compete against each other at any Olympics. Could Vonn possibly summon a "miracle," as she called it, a slalom performance from somewhere in her past to make a lead from the downhill portion stand up? Could Shiffrin hold onto her silver?

With the snow carefully descending under the artificial lights lining the course, the drama quickly dimmed. Vonn's slalom lasted all of about 10 seconds before she went off-course, leaving Shiffrin in second place Thursday between two women from Switzerland: gold medalist Michelle Gisin and bronze medalist Wendy Holdener.

Gisin, whose older sister Dominique tied for first in the 2014 Olympic downhill, produced a total time of 2 minutes, 20.90 seconds that was 0.97 seconds better than Shiffrin's.

Shiffrin ranked sixth in the downhill, 1.21 seconds slower than Gisin, and wasn't able to make up that deficit in the slalom, which was a much shorter track. The downhill took about 100 seconds; the slalom about 40.

"Clearly," said Shiffrin's coach, Mike Day, "the downhill didn't go to plan."

Still, Shiffrin added the combined silver to her giant slalom gold from a week earlier, giving her two medals — plus a surprisingly low fourth-place finish in

the slalom — in three races. She arrived in South Korea to chitter about entering five, but after a series of weather-related schedule changes, wound up dropping two.

"It's really nice to be at the end of it," she said, "and know that I do have two medals."

With her slalom gold from the 2014 Games, Shiffrin joins Bode Miller and Julia Mancuso as the only Americans with a medal in at least three Alpine disciplines.

"It's like being a great butterflier, being a great breaststroker, being a great freestyle and being a great backstroker," Day said. "There's not many people who do all of those really well."

Eight years ago, it was Vonn who went to the Vancouver Olympics accompanied by outsized anticipation and unrealistic speculation (by others) about four or five medals. She, too, came away with two, then missed the Sochi Olympics after tearing knee



ALESSANDRO TROVATI/AP

The United States' Mikaela Shiffrin competes in the slalom portion of the combined event at the Winter Olympics in Jeongseon, South Korea, on Thursday. Shiffrin won the silver medal.



LUCA BRUNO/AP

The United States' Lindsey Vonn reacts after skiing out in the slalom portion of the combined event on Thursday.

ligaments.

At what she has said must be her last Olympics because her oft-injured body cannot endure another four years, Vonn added a bronze on Wednesday in the downhill.

After Vonn's slalom ended suddenly, she crossed paths with Shiffrin in the finish area. They had a brief exchange.

"I mean, it's incredible what she's able to accomplish. She's so young and she approaches ski racing much different than pretty much anyone else," Vonn said later. "I think she had potential to do a lot more at these Games, but at the same time — same like me, you can't expect everything all the time."

So, then, there they were as the sun settled behind the clouds, the temperature dipped and the

last individual Alpine race of the Pyeongchang Games concluded. Yes, there is a team event Saturday, but neither Vonn nor Shiffrin is expected to enter.

Shiffrin is the best female skier of today, chasing a second consecutive overall title; Vonn is the best female skier in history, just five World Cup race wins away from tying Ingemar Stenmark's all-time record of 86.

Tears gathered in Vonn's eyes as she spoke about wishing she could be at Beijing in 2022, but knowing "that's just not the way it is," because, she explained, "My mind is still telling me I can do things that my body is telling me I can't."

Shiffrin, smiling and chuckling, talked about "a mix of thoughts right now," and her struggles with anxiety and inter-

nal pressures while dealing with postponements of the slalom and giant slalom, then the pushing up of the combined from Friday, making it all feel as if "someone was playing a game of ping-pong in my brain."

Neither can possibly know what the future will bring, of course.

But Vonn offered some words of caution about Shiffrin, who for quite some time, fairly or not, has been labeled "The Next Lindsey Vonn."

"She can ski for another 10 years and have a lot more medals and a lot more World Cups. But as I saw in my career, things can change quite quickly. You never know what's going to happen," Vonn said. "That's why you have to appreciate every moment that you have, because ski racing has a way of taking a lot from you."

Myhrer wins slalom as favorites ski out

By GRAHAM DUNBAR
Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — The shock wasn't only about who won the Olympic gold medal in the men's slalom, it was also about who failed to even finish the race.

André Myhrer, a 35-year-old Swede who took bronze in the event eight years ago in Vancouver, was the unlikely champion on Thursday. But it was Marcel Hirscher and Henrik Kristoffersen — the best slalom skiers on the World Cup circuit — that couldn't complete two runs to give themselves a chance at the title.

"To be able to do this after the season they have had is, of course, amazing for me," Myhrer said.

Hirscher skied off course in the opening run, while Kristoffersen set the fastest time. But the Norwegian couldn't make it all the way down the piste on the second run, leaving Myhrer at the top of the podium.

Both Hirscher and Kristoffersen won Olympic medals in this event four years ago in Sochi. They also combined for 1-2

finishes in four of the eight World Cup slaloms this season.

Myhrer watched in the finish area as Kristoffersen, holding a 0.21-second advantage out of the starting gate, skied out early in the second run.

That allowed Ramon Zenhaeusern of Switzerland to take an unexpected silver medal, 0.34 seconds behind Myhrer. The tallest man in the race at six feet seven threw his ski poles in the air after seeing he had taken the lead several racers before Myhrer completed his second run.

Bronze medalist Michael Matt of Austria was 0.67 behind Myhrer's two-run time of 1 minute, 38.99 seconds.

Matt, whose brother Mario won slalom gold four years ago at the age of 34, said he had given up hope of a medal before Kristoffersen started.

"I got my backpack and said, 'That's it,' because Henrik is really fast and skis very safe as well," said Matt, who had been 12th-fastest in the first run. "I thought it was over."

Kristoffersen is so safe he had top-three finishes in all eight World Cup slaloms this season. He won one race, while Hirscher

won six times and also completed the rest safely.

"It's better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all," Kristoffersen said.

Hirscher fell short in his quest for a third gold medal at the Pyeongchang Olympics. The Austrian great also won the combined event and the giant slalom, when Kristoffersen took silver.

"I had already really a bad feeling about the whole situation," Hirscher said, adding he had had some "really bad training days here."

Myhrer became the second 35-year-old Alpine skier to take gold at the Pyeongchang Games. Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway, barely two weeks older than Myhrer, won the downhill and set a record as the sport's oldest male Olympic champion.

Thursday's victory is a remarkable turnaround for Myhrer, who left the 2014 Sochi Olympics furious after giving up his chance at a medal on a difficult course.

"It was a tough Olympics for me," Myhrer said, reflecting on what happened in Russia. "I knew I would have my chance again."



MORRY GASH/AP

André Myhrer, of Sweden, celebrates his gold medal during the venue ceremony after the men's slalom on Thursday.

Two North Korean skiers wearing bib Nos. 107 and 108, Kang Song Il and Choe Myong Gwang, earned a second run. Only Choe completed the race, more than 43 seconds behind Myhrer as the slowest of the 43 finishers.

SPORTS



Uncharted territory

Middle Tennessee playing as ranked team for first time ever » **Page 53**

WINTER OLYMPICS

GOLDEN GIRLS



The United States women's hockey team celebrates winning the gold medal Thursday at the Winter Olympics in Gangneung, South Korea.

FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

US women outlast Canada in shootout, **Page 58**

Warriors aren't as dominant as before

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